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Documenting Landscape Performance

Andrew Robert Henry
BA (hons), MA

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Theatre Studies

School of Culture and Creative Arts

College of Arts

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis I make use of phenomenologically-inspired theories of landscape to define a particular subset of site-specific performance which I am calling landscape performance. I argue that these performances are distinct from other site-specific performances in the ways that they include their audience in the creation and embodiment of landscape. The project investigates what strategies are employed to document this kind of work and what issues may arise both in the method of documenting and in the documentation itself.

This work starts from the position that landscapes are unfixed, in flux and contested, and explores the ways that performance documentation, adds to the complexity and helps to create representations and manifestations that resist fixed meanings. Through an analysis of specific documents, this work aims to explore the multiplicity of meanings that can be drawn from the documentation of specific landscape performance works.

The findings of this thesis are dependent on three case studies exploring the work of prominent producers of landscape performance: NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites. The aim is to scrutinise each documentary methodology, draw attention to the multiple, intertwined and often conflicting ways that the documentation presents both performance and landscape and to discuss the implications of these documents and the documentation of this kind of work in general.

This work has applied a mixed methodology involving the interpretative analysis of performance documentation such as photographs, drawings, sound recordings, videos, and blogs, as well as the context in which they are presented. I also undertake reflective analysis of my own interaction with the makers of the work or the documentation itself. This process reveals the different ways that landscape performance documentation can affirm or disrupt understandings of landscape and uncovers fresh conceptual frameworks for performance documentation thereby providing a contribution to scholarship on the relationships between landscape, performance and documentation.

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Finally, I dedicate this thesis to other dyslexics and hope it acts as proof that even the most 'hopeless cases' can come at least this far. It's a harder path for us but I promise you – it is worth it.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis was made possible by an Arts and Humanities Research Council scholarship which allowed me to undertake a research project of my own design. The work stemmed from an interest in performance documentation, an active and engaging field of enquiry in theatre and performance research. There is an existing and growing body of scholarship engaging with the complexities of what documentation *is*, what it might *do*, and how it might be *used* (see Schneider 2001, Taylor 2003, Reason 2006, Heathfield and Jones 2012, Sant 2017, Giannachi and Westerman 2017). Matthew Reason goes as far as to state that documentation forms the second ‘predominant and preoccupying discourse within performance studies’ (2006: p.1). With the first being the investigations of those qualities that arguably distinguish live performance from other art forms and lend it its potency (ibid). At the early stages of my research I identified the potential for an original contribution to ongoing debates on the practice of documentation by bringing together a triad of interests: performance, documentation and landscape. I narrowed a broader interest in documentation to focus on the challenges and implications of documenting a particular kind of site-specific/generic performance which I conceptualise as landscape performance. These are performance works which facilitate an audience’s engagement with the land and implicate them in the creation of landscape.¹ I contest that the documentation of this kind of performance will open up new avenues for discussion about the ways that documentation operates and the kinds of representations, understandings or manifestations that it inspires. The analysis focuses on the documentation of three selected landscape performance makers: NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites. It explores the challenges of documenting that are particular to this kind of work and the ways that the documentation operates to affirm or disrupt the understandings of landscape produced by the work. My thesis proposes that by analysing relationships between landscape performance and documentation this study will create new ways of understanding and conceptualising those relationships and the methods used to study them, providing useful points of

¹ A detailed explanation of what landscape performance actually is can be found in the following chapter.

reference for future scholarship. This thesis may be useful for scholarship in and beyond the discipline of theatre/performance studies. It might help to re-think, for example, relationships between scopic and tactile engagement with landscape, which might have implications for the way that landscape is represented in, for instance, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and forms of cartography. It might allow further critical scrutiny of the way that site-based performances are represented by artists in, for example, marketing and publicity material.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Broadly, this thesis explores the relationships that are evoked between landscape, performance and documentation in certain performance works. My project asks if performance and landscape is permanently in a state of becoming, always in flux, and ever changing, how then might the documentary strategies of these landscape performance works reflect this. How can documentation account for a phenomenon which, as Pearson notes, is 'neither universally benign nor available for easy spectacular appropriation' (2006: p.11)? From these broader concerns more specific questions emerge:

- What strategies are employed by the makers of landscape performance to document their work?
- What ideas of landscape might be produced through the documentation of landscape performance works?
- Can performance through its documentation help to articulate or extend our understanding of landscape?
- Can landscape performance – in both its practice and theorisation of practice – help to articulate or extend our understanding of performance documentation?

CASE STUDIES

The study relies on the concept of landscape performance, a term used to denote performances which inspire an audience's particular – often physical – engagement with the land,

implicating them in acts of landscaping. It understands landscaping as an active, ongoing, relational process among human and nonhuman actors, where the environment is continually re-imagined and re-experienced. Landscape performance is a concept that can encompass work in a variety of scales and contexts, ranging from audio performances for a solo audience member, performances involving hundreds of participants walking, running or otherwise traveling through places, or involving activities. Identifying examples of landscape performances with the potential to become useful case studies was one of my first tasks, and involved scoping the wider field of landscape and site-based performance. My investigations discovered a broad range of work that can be contextualised through the concept of landscape performance. Whilst I eventually selected NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites (for reasons I will outline in more detail below), there were a number of other companies and performance makers whose work fitted the landscape performance concept but, ultimately, did not show enough range or depth of documentation to make for useful case studies.

I considered Lone Twin's *The Boat Project*. Lone Twin's Gregg Whelan and Gary Winters and undertake what they call 'Public Projects' in which the community where they are making the work is invited to participate in the creative process. Their website states that the company 'visit a particular area and work with the local community for a few weeks – longer – years sometimes – to make a unique, fugitive event shaped by the lives of everyone involved' (Lone Twin, 2018). Lone Twin's Public Projects seem to lend themselves to the landscape performance category. A particular example was their 2012 *The Boat Project* offers an interesting example which centred on the creation of a functional boat by using an accumulation of objects offered by participants. *The Boat Project* is a complex work which is in part actualised in the documentative process of building the boat but continues to work as the finished boat (a document of sorts) is used to sail to different places.

Another example can be found in the work of Louise Ann Wilson, a performance maker who makes site-specific performances that 'explore the relationship between landscape and place and

human life-events' (Louise Ann Wilson, 2018). Usually Wilson collaborates with a number of experts from fields out with theatre and performance favouring those with 'lay and local knowledge and skills.' A number of Louise Ann Wilson's performances could be described as landscape performance works; *Ghost Bird*, *Still Life*, *Jack Scout*, and *Fissure* all intend to engage their audiences in the participation of landscape, usually by leading them on interactive walks. These performance walks seek to open up discussion about the ways that people might experience and explore rural locations.

As a practitioner, Nic Green works across forms. Given her background in Human Ecology, it might seem reasonable to assume that there is a shared interest in ideas that correlate with the concept of landscape performance. Her website states that Green 'remains committed to developing creative work which can be named as ecological in its nature, in the sense that her practice focuses on the study of relationships; the meaning and nature of which emerge through immersive, time and place-based processes' (Arts Admin, n.d.). *Beauty Arises in the Stillness of Your Presence* is a work which exemplifies Green's commitment to exploring ecology through performance.

Other examples can be found in the work of performance makers such as Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Rimini Protokoll, Plan B, Minty Donald, Platform, Mike Pearson and Mike Brookes. My research uncovered a broad range of work that shares the focus at the heart of the landscape performance concept. Ultimately the concept was created out of a belief that this kind of work could open up new avenues for research into the practice of documenting performance. The research hinges on how landscape performance documents are made and in what ways this documentation performs differently from other types of documentation. The companies making this work have to think creatively about the ways they attempt to record and document it. In selecting my case studies, then, I narrowed the parameters of my study to those which fit both the landscape performance criteria and produce a wide range of performance documentation (and that was readily available) to analyse. Whilst these other performances align well with the landscape performance

concept, the makers did not undertake or present documentary practices which were extensive enough in volume or variety to make for effective case studies. Each may have had a singular aspect worth investigating (the Boat itself in Loan Twin's project could have been conceptualised as a kind of archive, for example) ultimately, there was not the same variety and depth made accessible in comparison to NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites.

Of all the potential landscape performance makers I identified, I selected NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites because I felt that they represented the best likelihood of opening up different avenues for exploration. Each case study shared a documentation strategy that was both varied and complex – weaving together different kinds of documentation, including: photographs, reviews, videos, sketches, audio recordings, books, Mis-guides; these were presented them on different platforms such as websites, blogs, DVDs and printed materials. Each company and practitioner provided enough documentation to be able to articulate with confidence whether the format or style was typical or uncharacteristic of a broader strategy. That is, whether their approach was consistent or incongruent as its representation of different iterations of performance or different performances altogether. Whilst all three case studies fit within the landscape performance categorisation, they are quite distinct from each other in their working methods, relationship to site, in the form and structure of the work, and their outputs. Each case study presents distinct problems and particularities and landscape is used as a useful conceptual framework for exploring the complex relationship between the live performance work and the varied materials used to document it.

METHODOLOGY

I employ a mixed methodology throughout the work, which primarily centres on the interpretative analysis of particular examples of documentation taken from the wider documentary methodologies of my selected case studies. The analysis focuses on a broad range of documentation such as photographs, drawings, blog posts, sound recordings, press releases and other promotional materials. At times (and especially in the final case study) it has been necessary to incorporate

reflections on my own experience as the documentation itself invites a level of participation. In these moments I am analysing not just the representational qualities of documentation but the experience that it inspires. Following the example of other performance scholars working in this multidisciplinary field of performance/landscape/documentation (Pearson, 2006), I use phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape as the primary critical framework in my analysis: 'landscape is not something to be looked at but lived in, a unity of people and environment... occupied, experienced and changed by human activity' (Pearson, 2006: p.11). In each case study I give a broad overview of the documentary process before selecting specific documents to analyse, paying close attention to the ways that they represent the performance and landscape. In each case study I make explicit choices on what performances and documents to focus my attention as well as what particular etymologies, histories, and theories to introduce to inform my analysis. These decisions indicate the potential of synthesising approaches drawn from different disciplines and fields of creative practice. By summarising and synthesising different bodies of literature, and particularly those from human geography and non-representational theory, this study will offer a unique insight into the relationships between landscape, performance and documentation which provide useful reference points for future scholarship. In the section following this introduction I investigate particular theoretical frameworks, setting up a clear critical architecture that will inform my analysis of landscape, performance and documentation within each of the chapters.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTERS

Structurally this thesis is organised into an opening chapter which defines terminology and sets the parameters for the work. This is then followed by three case studies focusing on NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites, each offering an exploration of their landscape performance work and documentation. The case studies show a variety of concerns of and a method employed by different performance makers and then offers analysis of specific documentation. Each case study

contains a specific set of questions to be addressed in the chapter, an introduction to the company or performance maker and the motivations behind their creative practice, an explanation of the reasons why their work constitutes landscape performance and justification for their appropriateness to this study, a broad overview of their documentary strategy and then an interpretative analysis of specific areas within their documentary methodology (photography, drawings, recordings etc.). Each section concludes with a response to the questions set out at the beginning of the case study.

Chapter One is split into three sections. In the first section I lay out the theoretical groundwork for my conception of Landscape performance. It begins with a discussion of competing epistemological approaches to landscape: visually-centred approaches which privilege sight, characterised by Cosgrove and Daniels as 'landscape as cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring, and symbolising surroundings' (Cosgrove and Daniels, 1988: p.1) and conceptions which are phenomenologically-inspired, such as Thomas' understanding of landscape as:

A network of related places which have gradually been revealed through people's habitual activities and interactions, the closeness and affinity that they have developed for some locations, and through important events, festivals, calamities, and surprises which have drawn other spots to their attention, causing them to be remembered or incorporated into stories.

(Thomas, 2000: p.173)

My study considers which epistemological approaches to landscape might best align with site-specific performance. After considering the broader impact of phenomenological enquiry on discussions of people's relationships to spaces and places, I align phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape with particular kinds of site-specific performances and suggest how they might be conceptualised as acts of landscaping. This section narrows the parameters of the thesis to focus on performance work which might be described as landscape performance.

The second section of the chapter lays out the complex interrelationships between performance and its documentation, a much debated and ideologically loaded topic. I work through two discourses on documentation. First, arguments for performance as ephemeral, as articulated in terms of its disappearance and as resistant to documentation (Phelan, 1993). Second, performance as enduring, mediated by its documentation (Schneider 2001, Heddon 2002, Reason 2006). This discussion is important to the study as it draws on research which widens the scope for what can be considered documentation. In this broader understanding of documentation, the body, through performance, can function as a kind of document. This understanding of documentation is one which I adopt as the thesis develops. It has, I argue, important implications for considering the relationship between performance, landscape and documentation, and specifically for phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape as lived or in-process (see Ingold, 2000). The framing chapter concludes with a discussion of the convergences of landscape, performance and documentation that are already present in existing academic materials, drawing out multidisciplinary convergences (Pearson and Shanks, 2001) that will help contextualise the rest of the thesis.

Chapter Two focuses on the work of NVA who are a Scottish organisation headed by artistic director Angus Farquhar. They are perhaps best known for creating large scale performance works in a variety of outdoor locations. Since their conception, NVA have endeavoured to create performance works which explore the ways that humans experience and interact with landscape, and many of their performances can be conceptualised as landscape performance. This case study focuses on their *Speed of Light* suite of works (see Farquhar, 2014) which began in 2012 as a production commissioned to commemorate the London Olympics, and which has since travelled to Japan and Germany as well as a number of other UK locations. *Speed of Light* invites hundreds of participants to don specially designed suits with lights attached to them and run in choreographed patterns at specific outdoor locations. The audience are invited to observe the runners as they walk a less strenuous path. The case study investigates the documentary strategy employed for *Speed of Light*, exploring their photographic documentation, Angus Farquhar's Grim Runner blog, documentary

films, press releases and other promotional material, the book the company produced in collaboration with the Ruhr, Germany tourist board and the ‘unofficial’ documentation created by spectators or participants. In my analysis of NVA’s ‘light trail’ images I draw on Tim Ingold’s concept of the meshwork. The theory is useful as it emphasises the interrelationships between body and environment and therefore helps to articulate the representational limits of the images. Elsewhere in the case study, I utilise phenomenological and non-representational theories (particularly those of Lorimer and Daniels) to explain how narrative impacts our experience and understanding of landscape. These ideas are used to inform an analysis of Angus Farquhar’s *Grim Runner* blog which – with its descriptions of bodies, places, experiences, and memories – help to establish a pluralistic perspective on landscape performance in which all grand narratives are suspect. I take this analytical-methodological approach to address the potential and limits of this documentation, exploring whether certain approaches can help to articulate or extend understandings of landscape.

Chapter Three focuses on the work of Simon Whitehead, a movement artist and choreographer based in Wales. Untitled States is the name given to the collaborative partnership between Simon Whitehead and Barnaby Oliver, a sound artist most recently based in Australia. Whitehead’s solo work and his collaborations with Oliver explore how performance can articulate or investigate relationships between sound, movement and place. Much of Whitehead’s work is inspired by and is attentive to lived and bodily experience, and is predominantly made in relation to a specific place or emerges from a particular landscape. Throughout the chapter, I investigate the different methods employed by Whitehead to document his landscape performance works. I look at the two primary platforms he has used to disseminate his documentation, focusing, in particular, on a book of collected documentary materials entitled *Walking to Work* (2006) and the Untitled States website (see Untitled States, n.d.) in which Whitehead archives a mixture of documentation from past and more recent performances. Rather than focusing on a single performance work, the case study draws on a few selected performances in its analysis of Whitehead’s documentary strategies and materials. The performances are selected from a varied portfolio which envelopes the broad

range of forms the artist engages with. The chapter moves through three distinct sections: the first on photographic documentation, second on the artist's drawings and sketches, and finally on sound recordings. Phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape are used throughout the chapter to contextualise the performance and documentation and to offer a critical framework. Within the case study I employ the concept of haptic visibility to draw attention to the less obvious sensory experiences inherent in the photographic documentation of Whitehead's work. I reconsider Whitehead's drawings as a performance score and build on this through a discussion of Ingold's concept of wayfaring. Finally, I integrate existing soundscape research to show how Whitehead's sound recordings of his work render the landscape in a way that emphasises the aural world. By developing this multidisciplinary, and multi-sensory, approach I intend to offer insight into the complexities of the relationships between landscape, performance and documentation.

Chapter Four focuses on the work of Wrights & Sites, four artist-researchers committed to producing experimental, site-specific work across a range of media. Wrights & Sites create a series of provocations which aim to help participants break out of cycles of behaviour in order to reconnect with the landscape around them. The chapter focuses on their *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* (Wrights & Sites, 2006): a small, plastic-bound book of images, designs and written tasks. *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* is the culmination of years of research, exploration and creative practice. It brings together documents and ideas from previous performance projects which they facilitated, directly participated or collaborated in and provides a depository for ideas and suggestions for performances/actions by new audiences and participants. In other words, *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* is both a document of past performances and/or a script for future enacted or imagined performances. The group hope that participants who use the *Mis-guide* can practice experiencing the landscapes they inhabit differently, from new perspectives, and perhaps gain fresh appreciation for the aspects of our landscape that are hiding in plain sight or unexplored in the imagination. Articulating the multidimensional nature of the practices, the company have consistently avoided single narratives about what the work is, where it comes from and what it might mean. The study

works through some of the ideas that underpin the concept of mis-guidance and undertakes three of the tasks from *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* in order to analyse how it functions in practice. My analytical-methodological approach in this case study adds to the interpretative analysis applied in the previous case studies as I draw on more overtly personal and experiential methods to investigate the work. As the *Mis-guide* document contains a series of provocations for actions or performances, a valid way of analysing the work seemed to be by participating in the exercises. This approach was different as I had to explicitly acknowledge myself as the researcher in the work, complicating my relationship with the documentation I was studying. I personally engaged with a landscape, and this allowed me to create my own documentation, it highlighted the subjectivity of documentation. These approaches further complexified and enriched this study of the relationship between performance, landscape and documentation. However, I still draw on a range of theoretical materials to inform the study. For the first task, for example, I underpin my practical engagement with the task with a discussion of Bachleard and his concept of topophilia. In doing so, I open up a pathway for understanding the imaginative component of the landscape experience. For the second task, I follow the instructions and invite longstanding friend and neighbour, Bob, on a tour of the town where we grew up together. Throughout the study, I position the stimulation of memory and imagination – via walking, looking, touching, photographing – as acts of landscaping and explore the interrelationship between the document, performance and the conceptions of landscape it inspires.

My conclusion reflects on each of the case studies and considers the wider implications of the work. It draws out the key findings from the study and speculates on how my findings might inform further research. The thesis contributes to existing knowledge and debate in a variety of ways. It offers a contribution to ongoing debates on the practice of documentation; in particular, it gives insights into the ways in which documentation establishes different audiences for ‘live’ work and the ways that these different types of documentation engage those audiences. The thesis offers insights into each of the case studies that provide significant contributions to how these works are understood and accessed. In particular, it considers how and why contemporary artists apply

different documentation strategies, and how and to what effect documentation of performance work is circulated and disseminated. Its investigation of the particular approaches taken by artists to represent the fluid and tactile engagement with landscape which has the potential to inform other fields of study or practices that are concerned with producing representations of landscape (such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and cartography). The analyses of the case studies work through a set of analytical methods that make useful reference points for future scholarship, and indicate the potential of synthesizing approaches drawn from different disciplines and fields of creative practice.

CHAPTER 1 – FRAMING THE THESIS

LANDSCAPE

This opening chapter outlines and discusses the concept of what I am calling landscape performance: that is, performances which may constitute acts of landscaping, as differentiated from or seen as a subdivision of site-specific performance/land art. Secondly, the chapter considers what the process of documenting this kind of work might reveal about the relationships between the work itself, its documentation and landscape. This introductory section draws attention to the etymology of the word 'landscape' and shows how its particular history has affected our understanding and use of the term. It will explore how the use of the term resulted in two contrasting approaches to the study of landscape: one which focuses on the analysis of the landscape as a visual phenomenon and the other which focuses on the experiences that particular landscapes afford to those who inhabit them. Performance scholar Mike Pearson states: 'reflecting upon the specific relationship between place and performance, we may usefully borrow from other disciplinary optics. We may realign such performance as an active agency within adjacent fields of endeavour: geography, architecture, urban planning' (2010: p.42). Pearson draws attention to the idea that performance, like landscape, is itself 'an interpretive and representational practice, a medium that can juxtapose, superimpose and elide different orders of material' (ibid: p.44). This project aims to show how certain relationships between ideas of landscape, performance and documentation might open up possible avenues of interpretation instead of locking them into fixed positions. It will borrow from a variety of adjacent disciplinary optics (as Pearson advocates) in order to explore relationships and connections between the terms and as a result, pose fresh questions on topics that have already received considerable attention.

WHAT IS LANDSCAPE?

The word 'landscape' is contested, its meaning and usage debated in and across disciplines. Beginning their introduction to the *Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies* (2013) Peter Howard,

Ian Thompson and Emma Waterton draw attention to the diverse use of the term and state that '...it will surprise no one that there has been a plethora of definitions of landscape and that there is no commonly agreed one' (2013: p.1). John Wylie opens his book *Landscape* (2007) with the gambit that landscape, in the varied and sometimes competing ways in which people have understood and defined it, is *tension*: 'not only is landscape precisely and inherently a set of tensions; there are also significant tensions and differences between the various traditions of landscape enquiry' (p.2). Wylie goes further to contend that it is such tensions that 'helps to make landscape something intriguing, creative and productive for academics, artists and writers' (ibid. p.9). This idea is given credence by the wide range of scholarship and creative practice inherently bound to landscape either as a stimulus, subject matter or material. This thesis focuses on the links between conceptions of landscape in relation to selected performance works and their documentation. Given this, it is necessary to consider where in the wide spectrum and in the minutia of conceptions of landscape this work positions itself.

What a landscape *is* or what a landscape *does* has been conceptualised and developed in different ways by different theorists. Such is the interest in landscape studies that the last twenty-or-so years have witnessed the development of two significant paradigm-shifting movements in the study of landscape: the first involved an influx of insights from visual theory, critical theory and post-structural thought,² and the second brought new phenomenologies of the body and performance to the fore.³ These competing epistemological approaches – one interpretive and the other phenomenological – attest to the impossibility of creating a firm or fixed idea of 'landscape', a conclusion Gillian Rose (2003) reaches in her article *Contested Landscapes* when she states: 'the contestation of landscape can thus be examined in a number of ways, landscapes may be representationally unstable, they may be practiced in different ways, and the same materiality may enable very different relations to human subjects, among many other possibilities' (p.271). Or, to

² Examples include: Barrell (1980), Bermingham (1986), Cosgrove (1985), Cosgrove and Daniels (1988), Duncan and Duncan (1988), Matless (1998), Muir (1981), Mulvey (1989), Pollock (1988), and Rose (1993).

³ Examples Include: Ingold (2000), Thrift (1996, 1997), Lorimer (2012), Thomas (2004), and Pearson (2010)

put it another way, the direct experience of landscapes change dependent on who inhabits it and understandings of landscape shift dependent on what purpose someone may have in their study of it. Therefore, whether landscape is conceptualised as something which is perceived through experience or something that can be explored through a study of its representations, either competing epistemological understandings must acknowledge the uncertain and flexible nature of the concept of landscape.

The etymology reveals that the word 'landscape' originates from Germanic languages. One of the oldest references in the Dutch language dates from the early 13th century when 'lantscap' referred to land region or environment. Marc Antrop, whose paper 'A Brief History of Landscape Research' (2013) discusses the roots of the word, states that the original term 'lantscap' is 'related to the word "land", meaning a bordered territory, but its suffix – scep refers to land reclamation and creation as is also found in the German "Landschaft" – "schaffen" = to make' (Antrop, p.12). Alternative opinions on the etymology of the word suggest that the word originated from the ancient Greek verb "skopein" which means: behold, contemplate, examine, inspect (Swenson, 2015: p.3). It is generally accepted though, that 'landscape' was first introduced into the English vernacular through the international reputation of 17th Century Dutch painting⁴ which offers an explanation as to why the word continues to hold connotations of visuality and observation.

The importance of landscape painting on the use and understanding of the term cannot be understated, and Wylie states that the pictorial understanding of landscape has been particularly influential in shaping the common usage of the word and remains unchallenged in many places today. Dutch landscape painting, which has been attributed with introducing the word to Britain through the popularity of the genre, followed a long tradition that began in Italy some centuries earlier. Both landscape painting traditions used the same key principle, which has been vital in the

⁴ A small selection of influential landscape artists of this tradition include: Esaias van de Velde (1587–1630), Hendrick Avercamp (1585–1634), Jan van Goyen (1596–1656), Salomon van Ruysdael (1602–1670), Pieter de Molyn (1595–1661).

history of the conception of landscape. This principle, 'linear perspective', is a geometrical system for creating the illusion of space and distance on a flat surface. Simply put, 'linear perspective' is an approach where converging lines meet at a single vanishing point on a canvas and all shapes are portrayed as smaller with increasing distance from the eye. Organised around a vanishing point on the horizon, the technique afforded a sense of depth to compositions, depicting elements in a way that mirrored 'real-life' optical perception. The ability to create the illusion of three-dimensional space in paintings resulted in works of art that offered viewers an impression of land that was 'lifelike' — as though viewed through a window. While viewers did not actually believe that the paintings allowed them to see real life, there was pleasure taken from paintings' verisimilitude and respect for the painter's craft.

This was, it has been argued, the 'cardinal significance of perspective, and of the landscape art it enabled: it was understood to be a realistic truthful and authoritative representation of space' (Wylie, 2007: p.58). In *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger, an eminent art critic, notes that the convention of perspective: 'structured all images of reality to address a single spectator who, unlike God, could only be in one place at a time' (1972). In other words, linear perspective eliminated the multiple viewpoints which were a construct popular in medieval art and created instead an illusion of space from a single, fixed viewpoint. The emphasis on the individual viewer, it is argued, contributed to a conception of humans' position in the world. As Wylie puts it, 'It is difficult to overstate the influence that perspectival techniques of picturing have more broadly upon both our sense of ourselves and our perception in the world' (Wylie, 2007: p.57). Arguably, the foundations of conceptions of landscape derive from the notion of the detached spectator. The study of 'landscape' has been dominated for much of its history by particular epistemologies which build on the idea that landscape is something seen from a distance and from a fixed view-point.

The legacy of the term as something visual influenced the formative stages of landscape research in a profound way. A broad 'field sciences' model was first employed by human

geographers, with this distinctively positivist approach to landscape research predicated on the role of observation. Scholars (such as geographer Carol Seuer and historian W.G. Hoskins) would undergo lengthy periods immersed in the field and Wylie states that: 'much of the writing – and much of its power – is rooted in a particular mode of neutral, empirical observation' (2007, p.5). Typically, this mode of scholarship involved the recording and presenting of trends and features based on the accumulation of indisputable factual evidence: 'Under the aegis of a certain sites of observation, landscape takes shape as an external, syncretic, observable whole' (ibid). Underlying this approach is the conviction that geographical study is first of all knowledge gained by observation. The role of landscape research, then, was to create representations of landscape through the documentation of empirical facts gained from surveillance. Although this type of scholarship is integral to the history of landscape studies and the work of academics like Seuer and Hoskins remains in the canon today, their work is now commonly presented as something to be critiqued. A major challenge occurred in the field when geographers shifted the emphasis towards landscape interpretation, with landscape figured as a social construct with narratives and symbolic meanings.

This major development in the study of landscape evolved the visual approach into different interpretive models. All these new models, although varying, approach the idea of landscape as a way-of-seeing rather than a-thing-seen. This was a notable shift in the understanding of landscape because it moved away from the idea of landscape as scenery, the meanings of which could be drawn out simply by describing its details. What emerged was the idea of landscape as a cultural phenomenon the study of which could unlock certain social or political structures that go unchallenged. No longer were cultural geographers documenting physical features of the landscape, now emphasis was placed analysing the *structures* of landscapes. This type of scholarship has been advanced greatly by the work of geographers such as Keneth Olwig and David Matless and ideas which position the physical and cultural materiality of landscapes as the focus for interpretative analysis (Wylie, p.98). As Matless points out:

The question of what landscape 'is' or 'means' can always be subsumed in the question of how it works; as a vehicle of social and self-identity, as a site for the claiming of a cultural authority, as a generator of profit, as a space for different kinds of living.

(Matless, 1998, p.12)

Epistemologically, this approach was still deeply connected to the historical pictorial idea of landscape as the role of the observer remained. Even though this type of research advanced the initial positivist study of landscape, knowledge was still produced by and located in a detached, observing subject, a subject who, through and by the depth of perspective, is able to spectate from an objective point of view.

Denis E. Cosgrove was one of the first theorists to develop this new interpretative approach. His work sought to expose and analyse what Bermingham (1986) describes as the traditional 'ideology of landscape'. She affirms that: 'landscape embodied a set of socially, and, finally, economically determined values to which the painted image gave cultural expression' (Bermingham, 1986: p.3). Through an analysis of the ideology of certain historical landscapes, Cosgrove's work aimed to establish and discuss the 'authority' that such an understanding of landscape and perspective affirmed. For Cosgrove:

A landscape is a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolising surroundings... a landscape park is more palpable but no more real, no less imaginary, than a landscape painting or a poem... and of course, every study of landscape further transforms its meaning, depositing yet another layer of cultural representation.

(1988: p.1)

This stance laid the foundations for the emergence of 'new cultural geography' (Wylie, 2007: p.71), which witnessed a variety of cultural geographers utilising interpretative techniques of literary and cultural theory to study landscape as a *social construct*. The task for this type of landscape study centred on 'uncovering the hidden codes and meanings, and unquestioned assumptions, which structure how the text of landscape is read' (ibid). Landscape, in these terms, came to refer to 'the

outcome of particular visual processes of description and symbolisation' (ibid: p.91). New cultural geographies developed methods of analyses that implicated landscape images and texts within systems of cultural, political and economic power. In doing so, they defined landscape as a particular set of cultural values, attitudes and meanings: landscape as a 'way of seeing,' a composition and structuring of the world.

As Pearson articulates, it is with great difficulty that landscape – as a concept – escapes the 'durable and persuasive formulation as a piece of scenery, and visual phenomenon and a pictorial prospect from a select point of view' (2010: p.93) as all the work discussed to this point attests. However, during the last ten years or so there has been a 'second revolution', as Wylie calls it, in the study of landscape which has emerged out of new insights inspired by a phenomenological perspective of the world. Phenomenological understandings of landscape aim to distance the subject from the visual interpretive legacy which has been so dominant in landscape scholarship and, in turn, have enabled a critique of the 'epistemologies underlying both the definition of landscape as a way of seeing, and the interpretative or constructivist paradigm informing much cultural geography' (Wylie, p.140).

The distinctive branch of phenomenology that has stimulated debate in the study of landscape derives from the work of Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty and is commonly known as 'existential phenomenology.' In recent years, numerous academics have advocated and utilised phenomenological insights in their work in order to address issues of nature, embodiment and performance. The approach taken by Merleau-Ponty and others marks a shift in the way we defined ourselves in relation to the world around us. It marked a challenge to existing modes of thinking in the Western world which leant towards visual and objective detachment to the physical world, that the world is a physical material onto which we project our subjective meanings. Phenomenology attempts to blur this separation by focusing on the idea that humans are not only active in the world but are also, importantly, of the world itself. From the beginning 'my body is the

very basis of my intention and awareness; it is not a puppet figure animated by directives and representations emanating from a disembodied consciousness' (Wylie, 2007: p.148).

In this shift, the conception of landscape moves from a spectatorial epistemology to a phenomenological epistemology. As Merleau-Ponty put it, there is forever performed 'a certain possession of the world by my body, a certain gearing of my body to the world' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: p.250). What this change in philosophical stance allows is the understanding of landscape as a continual on-going process from which a sense of self might emerge. It is the fact that I am part of the physical landscape, that I belong to it, that enables my perception of it. In turn, it is my seeing of the landscape which enables the sense of belongingness to emerge. What Wylie makes clear though, is that: 'Merleau-Ponty does not simply relocate the self in the body, and then the body "in" the landscape. It goes beyond a redescription of landscape as bodily lifeworld, and becomes notably sharper in focus in so far as it explicitly seeks to redefine vision in corporeal terms' (2007: p.150). The self therefore, is not simply *in* the world but *of* it. Merleau-Ponty's initial phenomenology of self, body and world is expressive of being-in-the-world itself: landscape as a milieu of engagement and involvement. Landscape is not simply a scene to view but a 'lifeworld' – a world to live in.

The conflict between these two prevailing approaches to the study of landscape, one interpretive and the other phenomenological, is best exemplified in the question: is landscape the world we are living in, or is it something that we are looking at, from afar? Or, as Wylie asks, is landscape 'the mutual embeddedness and interconnectivity of self, body, knowledge and land - landscape as the world we live in, a constantly emergent perceptual and material milieu? Or is landscape better conceived in artistic and painterly terms as a specific cultural and historical genre, a set of visual strategies and devices for distancing and observing?' (2007: pp.1-2). One approach favours a spectatorial methodology, a strategy for observing and interpreting the landscape; the other understands landscape as a continual process and favours a participatory methodology, a reflection of being in and of the landscape. Currently, both approaches are prominent in the study of

landscape, two different schools of thought advocated by different theorists.⁵ Theoretically the approaches do not coalesce, so a question of choice arises to the potential scholar of landscape, a question of choice that will inform not only the way landscape is perceived on a theoretical level, but also what methods and over all epistemology are available within that definition. As the primary objective of this study is to define and explain how theatre or other kinds of live performance might be conceptualised as acts of landscaping, before drawing attention to potential questions that arise from such a proposition, it is necessary to position my own definition in line with an understanding and epistemology that is suited to theatre and performance itself. Once established, a second question arises about what kinds of landscape are evoked, produced or enabled through an engagement with landscape performance documentation.

To establish the concept of landscape performance, I first take direction from Mike Pearson scholar whose works: *Theatre/Archaeology* (2001), *In Comes I: Performance Memory and Landscape* (2006), and *Site-Specific Performance* (2010) are all – directly or indirectly – preoccupied with questions arising from the specific relationship created between performance and landscape. Pearson focuses his attention mostly on the work of theorists who favour phenomenological approaches to landscape research. For Pearson, ‘landscape is not separate from the lives lived [on the land]. But they are cognitive devices – not precise territorial zones, rigorously defined, delineated and patrolled – and they vary (in importance) place to place, individual to individual. This is slippery ground, places without firm boundaries...’ (Pearson, 2001: p.139). Pearson’s work argues that landscape is manifested through performance - that we understand landscape through our actions and encounters with it, and the ways in which acts upon us, and that this is an on-going

⁵ The spectatorial approach still prevails in the work of geographers like James and Nancy Duncan (2003, 2004). Their work focuses upon the contemporary context of American suburbia and investigates the cultural politics of landscape. Duncan and Duncan ‘reiterate a theme of much of their work – that landscape must be understood as a structured assembly of aesthetics’ (Wylie, 2007: p.80). This approach relies on the understanding of landscape as a visual phenomenon.

The spectatorial understanding also is still predominant in heritage and tourism sectors that reinforce this understanding through the circulation of art and images for promotional purposes which I will explore later in this thesis (see ‘Arthur’s Seat and Tourism’, p.80).

process.

Pearson's ideas are influenced by the work of anthropologist Tim Ingold and in particular the ideas put forward in his essays collected under the title *The Perception of Environment* (2000). 'The Temporality of Landscape', in particular is a paper which has become a 'cardinal citation' (Wylie, p.153) and has been used at the basis for much of the recent work on landscape and, in fact, been widely adopted in other associated fields. Wylie states:

Place owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there – to the sights, sounds and indeed smells that constitute its specific ambience. And these, in turn, depend on the kinds of activities in which its inhabitants engage. It is from this relational context of people's engagement with the world, in the business of dwelling, that each place draws its unique significance.

(2000, p.192).

Ingold argues that visually centred approaches are paradoxical and work against the inherent logic of landscape, that the visual/observational emphasis involves a: 'positing on the one hand a set of disembodied cultural meanings - a symbolic landscape - and on the other a bare, blank bedrock - a physical landscape - onto which cultural meaning is projected' (Wylie, 154). In a fundamental way this approach, Ingold argues, perpetuates a problematic duality: the separation between what is cultural (in the realms of ideas) and what is natural (in the realm of physical matter). Ingold usefully labels this problem the 'building perspective' and explains it in the short phrase: 'worlds are made before they are lived in' (2000: p.179). Wylie states that the building perspective leads unavoidably towards 'a tendency to treat bodily praxis as a mere vehicle for the outward expression of meanings emanating from a higher source in culture' (2007: p.169). Ingold attempts to work against the idea, prevalent in Western epistemologies, that meaning is projected onto the world by the mind and that the human body becomes the vehicle for that outward expression of meaning. Ingold does not understand the body to be a marionette which is a mere representation of our inner thoughts, beliefs and feelings; or the landscape to merely be a blank

canvas onto which we project meanings, histories and relationships.

Ingold contends that we must first stop considering 'thought' as a passive activity, something which we separate from the immediacy of the physical world. Ingold uses the term 'dwelling' in an attempt to blur the duality between the material, physical, world and culture, thought and expression that has dominated landscape scholarship. Influenced by and building on Martin Heidegger's article 'Building dwelling thinking' (1996), Ingold's dwelling perspective focuses on the agent-in-its-environment, or what phenomenology calls 'being-in-the-world' (Ingold, 2000: p.42), as opposed to the self-contained individual confronting a world 'out there' (ibid). Dwelling denotes a 'being immersed from the start, like other creatures, in an active, practical and perceptual engagement with constituents of the dwelt-in world' (ibid). Through the dwelling perspective, Ingold attempts to redefine thought and knowledge as actions which are active and engaged in the world; they occur as a result of the complex and unstable relationship people share with each other and their environments. As Wylie states, 'Importantly, neither "people" nor "environments" are constructed as fixed, stable, already-given entities here. Both are rather seen as continually developing and elaborating via interactions (2007: p.159). Thus, in this approach, 'both cultural knowledge and bodily substance are seen to undergo continuous generation in the context of an ongoing engagement with the land and with the beings - human and non-human - that dwell therein' (Ingold, 2000, p.133). Through a practical engagement with their lived-in environments people, in their relational contexts, are continuously generating meaning. This is a process which is immanent and in-flux, it evolves in relation to the person, the environment and the interconnected relationships between them. The dwelling perspective involves a vision of nature and environment as active forces and participants in the unfolding of life, as both agents of change and that which is changed - as simultaneously both the object and the subject of dwelling.

Although Ingold is an anthropologist, his ideas are taken up and encountered in the study of landscape, particularly through 'non-representational theory' or what is sometimes called 'the

performative turn' which was conceptualised by Nigel Thrift (1996, 1997, 2000, 2008). According to Thrift, the non-representational project is concerned with describing landscape practices, 'mundane everyday practices that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves in particular sites' (1997: p.142). This is inspired by and an advancement of the phenomenological perspectives described by Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Ingold and is widely recognised as significant development of the phenomenological perspective within the study of landscapes. Non-representational theory reinvestigates broad areas of enquiry such as: nature, identity, space, the body through a focus on performativity. Non-representational theory is not a singular thing, rather, it is, as Hayden Lorimer notes, 'an umbrella term for diverse work that seeks better to cope with our self-evidently more-than-human, more-than-textual, multisensual worlds' (2005, p.83). It is within non-representational theory that we begin to see an adopting and sharing of terms across adjacent disciplinary optics (as Pearson suggests) in subjects like geography, archaeology, anthropology, ecology and performance studies and where we begin to see useful convergences between performance and landscape.

Non-representational theory, or 'more-than-representational theory', Lorimer's (2005) alternative phrasing, attempts to generate new approaches without applying the dualisms present in the previous visually-centred approaches to landscape study. The theory is, therefore, an umbrella term for those seeking to investigate: representation *and* practice, body *and* society, culture *and* nature, thought *and* action. Both 'being' and environment are mutually emergent in this sense and are continuously brought into existence together. 'Performance' here represents a place of work or special moment within landscape (see Pearson, 2006: pp.152-162). As John David Dewsbury, Paul Harrison, Mitch Rose and John Wylie state in *Enacting Geographies*:

Non-representational theory is... characterised by a firm belief in the actuality of representation. It does not approach representations as masks, gazes, reflections, veils, dreams, ideologies, as anything, in short, that is a covering which is laid over the ontic.

(2002: p.438)

Representations are not perceived as illusionary or unreal; rather they are important in and of themselves. They are not a code to be cracked, text to be read; instead, representations are understood as performative – as doings. Thus, the point is to ‘redirect attention from the posited meaning towards the material compositions and conduct of representations’ (ibid). There is a shift in mentality and approach; a move away from the persistent ideas of ‘images of landscape’ towards the study of specific acts of ‘landscaping’. Or, putting this differently, the world is understood to be a performative process which is continually in the making, as opposed to being structured or stabilised by texts, images or other materials. It is evident that non-representational theory puts the lived body, bodily practice and performance at the centre of its understanding of landscape. Embodiment is both the fundamental topic of study as well as the unavoidable medium in which ‘sense’ is made. In this way, ‘attentive analysis of, and, quite often, direct personal participation in, embodied acts of landscaping become the substantive task for contemporary landscape studies’ (Wylie, 2007: p.166).

From a non-representational perspective, performance is inseparable from landscape; in fact, our understanding of landscape emerges out of performance of and with landscape. Figures like Hayden Lorimer have placed particular emphasis on exploring sites of ‘special interest’ and investigated the performance of discrete features in the landscape. His work takes overlooked structures such as paths, stiles, dykes, sheep pens, cattle grids, bus shelters, bothies, and scarecrows and investigates the kinds of performance that such features enable or prescribe. Lorimer explains that ‘such folk geographies of things-in-places would focus on narratives, tales, memories and material remains of the not-so-distant past’ (Lorimer, 2017). This emphasis on the importance of performance as a focus for landscape study is further affirmed by Mike Pearson when he states that:

Landscape embodies human practices, and both habitual and unique activities are understandable in the context of past and future acts. Just as landscapes are constructed out of the imbricated actions and experiences of people, so people are constructed in and dispersed through their habituated

landscape...

(Pearson, 2006: p.12)

Aligning performance with the phenomenological conception of landscape is sensible appropriate? Justifiable? Valid? not only because of the shared terminology and concerns with experience, embodiment and relationships, but because performance is already theorised as an integral component of non-representational theories of landscape. The role of performance is clearly defined within a non-representational understanding as the embodiment of certain actions characteristic of that landscape, so the question for this study shifts towards what role 'theatrical performance' plays in the embodiment and representation of landscape.

THE SPATIAL TURN

The work of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty contributed to what is known in critical circles as the 'spatial turn'. As Schmid et al claim, 'questions of space are accorded a great deal of attention, extending beyond geography' (Schmid et al, 2008: p.27). Phenomenological insights influenced a number of French theorists who took a particular interest in conceptualising beings and environments, space and place.

A theorist whose ideas are important in my refinement of conceptions of landscape in this thesis is Michel De Certeau. De Certeau writes that 'space is a practised place' (de Certeau 1984: 117) and the implications of this distinction prove meaningful in the context of this thesis. De Certeau states that:

A place (lieu) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location (place). The law of the 'proper' rules in the place: the elements taken into consideration are beside one another, each situated in its own 'proper' and distinct locations, a location it defines. A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability.

(ibid)

In contrast to the fixity and stability of place:

Space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalise it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities.

(ibid)

The constituting factors that turn a place into a space are the complex ebb and flow of action and interaction. Thus a street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by the people who walk in it. Reacting against an epistemic practice and convention that assumes observation as the basis of all legitimate truth claims, de Certeau calls for an approach that accounts for the role of experience in the production of space. In doing so he articulates a notion of space as the product of the interactions between a place and the practices of its users.

Another significant figure in this respect is Henri Lefebvre. His *The Production of Space* received increasing critical attention as people sought new vocabularies and conceptions of space in the wake of developments in urbanisation and globalisation. As Christian Schmid et al affirm, 'these new space–time configurations determining our world call for new concepts of space corresponding to contemporary social conditions' (2008: p.27). Writing at the end of his career and in the wake of the 1968 Paris uprisings Lefebvre's focus on space reflected what he saw as a distinctive shift to 'urban revolution' displacing 'industrial revolution' at the centre of Marxist criticism. His work focused on trying to force an epistemological shift in new Marxist criticism from 'conceiving "things in space" to that of the actual "production of space" itself' (Merrifield, 2000: p.106).

The basis of his theory is that space does not exist 'in itself' – that there is no material reality that is somehow independent from social reality but is rather produced by and fundamentally tied to social reality. In other words, space is not a blank canvas upon which we project meaning but is instead something that is produced by the people who inhabit it:

Central to Lefebvre's materialist theory are human beings in their corporeality and sensuousness, with their sensitivity and imagination, their thinking and their ideologies; human beings who enter into relationships with each other through their activity and practice

(Schmid et al, 2008: p.29).

The core of the theory of the production of space identifies three moments of production: first, material production; second, the production of knowledge; and, third, the production of meaning. By bringing these different modalities of space together, Lefebvre wants to *expose* and *decode* space, to update and expand Marx's notion of *production*. Whilst this has major implications in terms of how a theorist might re-orientate discussions of labour and power, for this thesis it is more influential for the ways that it opens up discussion about how we might conceptualise space. His work necessitates an understanding of space that is not a fixed and stable object but rather something that a person has agency in, space is made rather than apprehended:

Space is to be understood in an active sense as an intricate web of relationships that is continuously produced and reproduced. The object of the analysis is, consequently, the active processes of production that take place in time.

(ibid, p.41).

An important incite that is extrapolated from analysis of Lefebvre's theory of the production of space is that the three aforementioned dimensions of the production of space have to be understood as being fundamentally of equal value. Space is simultaneously perceived, conceived, and lived – no one of these constituents takes precedent nor is there a hierarchy, they are all dependent and exist concurrently. Thus, space is unfinished as it is continuously produced, and it is always bound up with time. Lefebvre maintains that we must conceive reality in *fluid movement*, in its *momentary existence* and *transient nature*. Now, space becomes reinterpreted not as a dead, inert thing or object but as organic and alive: space has a pulse, and it palpitates, flows, and collides with other spaces. Lefebvre's favourite metaphors hail from hydrodynamics: spaces are described in terms of 'great movements, vast rhythms, immense waves—these all collide and 'interfere' with one

another; lesser movements, on the other hand, interpenetrate' (Lefebvre trans Nicholson-Smith, 1991: p.87). This understanding of space as always in process has implications for the documentation of landscape performance. Documentation is or can be associated with fixity – with preserving or capturing a moment in time. This will be discussed in later in the thesis including a detailed introduction to this idea in the following section (see 'Liveness and Disappearance' on p.43).

The phenomenological influence is clear in Lefebvre's work as he makes a distinction between the geometrical components which mark the space as material and those actions and relationships which mark the space as experienced and meaningful. Whilst clearly separate, these qualities both refer to one and the same space. In this regard Lefebvre's theory is grounded in the work of another phenomenologically-inspired French theorist whose work is also pertinent to this thesis: Gaston Bachelard, and specifically Bachelard's thoughts on living and dwelling. Bachelard's phenomenology is often referred to as 'topoanalysis' which aims to expose and describe the ontological state of 'topophilia' which – in simple terms – means the love of space. His *The Poetics of Space*, an influential phenomenological analysis of lived space published in French in 1957 (and translated to English in 1964) proved to be extremely instructive for Lefebvre and to this thesis.

In *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard tells us that 'a house that has been experienced is not an inert box. Inhabited space transcends geometrical space' (1969: p.47). Bachelard attempts to evidence an 'essence' of dwelling which he says is most evident in the intimate spaces of home and made available via the poetic image:

Transcending our memories of all the houses in which we have found shelter, above and beyond all houses we have dreamed we lived in, can we isolate an intimate, concrete essence that would be a justification of the uncommon value of all of our images of protected intimacy?

(ibid, p.8).

For Bachelard, the poetic image of the house is the ideal vehicle to analyse the experience of space as it offers qualities which are not merely explained by history or psychology – a complexity

that best reflects our experience of dwelling. The poetic image emerges from a form of forgetting or not-knowing that 'is not ignorance but a difficult transcendence of knowledge' (ibid, p.xxvi). His focus on the poetic image is evidence of the phenomenological scepticism of the epistemological traditions of observation and the prevalence of philosophical discussions of space which were entirely preoccupied with visual evidence. Despite its perceptual sophistication, the eye cannot necessarily go beyond a description of surface as Bachelard states: 'Sight says too many things at the same time. Being does not see itself. Perhaps it listens to itself' (1994: p.388). Centring his analysis on the literary poetic image he states: 'We are far removed from any reference to simple geometrical forms' (1969: p.47). He lays out the complexity of the task, explaining that it is not enough from an analytical perspective to present a generalised description of architectural features or objects in space: 'it is not a question of describing houses, or enumerating their picturesque features and analysing for which reasons they are comfortable' (ibid p.4). This is because:

The space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimate of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination.

(1969: xxxii)

To clarify his ideas further it is important to note that Bachelard marks off Cartesian space from *ontological space* or, to put it another way, he makes a distinction between geometric arrangement and its dynamic inhabitants. Of course, seeing space from geometric perspective is important to our daily lives. We need to understand the shape and area of a room before we can lay a carpet, we need measurements or floorplans in order to organise things like furniture, appliances and other objects in order to 'fill the space' in ways according to taste and practicality. Separate from this is the phenomenological perspective which is more concerned with how people inhabit and dwell in ontological space.

To illustrate Bachelard's view of ontological space as related to theatrical performance, I would be *at-home* in the *dwelling space* only when there is a close proximity between my being and

the being of the audience with whom I am sharing the space of performing, such as a theatre. Proximity in this sense does not denote measurable distance (between performer and audience, for example) as this is not what is at stake in this conception. As a performer I may be situated close to an audience member with whom I am performing to – in Cartesian space – and, yet, I may be at a significant *ontological distance* from that audience member in terms of our experience and sensibilities so much so that we are prevented from having a truly ‘meaningful’ and ontological connection between us. The ‘space’ which I share with the audience members’ being, as opposed to Cartesian space, represents for Bachelard:

the intangible, but nevertheless indisputable, *ontological distance* that highlights our original mode of Being-in-the-world, which we experience when dwelling within various situations of our concerned and solicitous involvement with the world and *others*’

(Magrini, 2017: p.763, italics in original).

Immersed in the complexity of this conception, ‘place’ is not reducible to ‘position,’ it is not merely the arrangement of objects within the physical architecture. Rather, a place of ontological dwelling is always representative of a network of interconnected meanings that we share with others. Magrini states that it is useful to think of this network of interconnected meanings as ‘the *world of our meaningful involvements*’ (ibid: italics in original). Bachelard’s phenomenology encourages the exploration of these networks through interpretive, imaginative, and poetic activity. So, when Bachelard poetises the ‘space’ of the house within which we dwell, and in turn, dwells in us, in ‘poetic’ imagery, it must be understood in terms of a space comprised of the inhabiting practices of the imaginative and creative subject.

It is clear to see the connections between certain ideas of Lefebvre, Bachelard and de Certeau and their phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape. All are embroiled in the ontological dynamism experienced in our dwelling. They promote conceptions of landscape as a process and manifested through physical and imaginative performance. A phenomenologically-

inspired conception of landscape that draws on, among others, Lefebvre, Bachelard and de Certeau, appears to provide an appropriate and productive framework for my thesis and its investigation of the documentation of landscape performance.

PERFORMANCE AS AN ACT OF LANDSCAPING

In relation to this theoretical framework, what constitutes landscape performance works are those which implicate the audience in the conceptions of landscape as performed or performing. The range of what might come under these umbrella terms may be quite broad. A number of works of Land Art, for example, could be interpreted through this lens. Land Art is an established artistic movement which began in North America during the late 1960s and involves the manipulation of physical materials and environments as a means of creative expression. Whilst it may not be considered performance within traditional theatrical conventions the various performative interactions of its audiences could constitute acts of landscaping.

Mike Pearson (2010) draws attention to Land Art's permanent or non-permanent structures that invite performance or participation. Among other examples, he discusses Mark Pimlott's *La Scala* (2006), which is situated in front of the Aberystwyth Arts Centre in Wales. The large concrete structure resembles a giant staircase: 'one can claim the stair to be closer to the sky and higher above the world. I want people to feel as though they are suspended in a year, leaving the world, as monumental as the architecture and landscape around them' (Pimlott, 2006). Notably, Pearson asserts that works like *la Scala* as well as other practices of Land Art '...may be instructive of further performative activities, often themselves inviting participation' (Pearson, 2010: p.26).

Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1970) is another piece which demonstrates the ways in which Land Art might facilitate the embodiment of landscape whilst working within the phenomenological frame. Wylie says of it, 'you can look at it, look from it, look with it, be in it, be part of it, connect it up with yourself and the surroundings in a number of different ways' (Wylie, 2007: p.142). Smithson

manages to create a piece which illustrates how Land Art may facilitate embodiments of landscape:

‘...the emphasis of Spiral Jetty is upon immersion in and corporal experience of landscape. Instead of being a static scene to survey with a cool, measured and discerning gaze, landscape here is mobile and multi-sensory; it surrounds us as well as bring in front of us’

(Wylie, 2007: p.143)

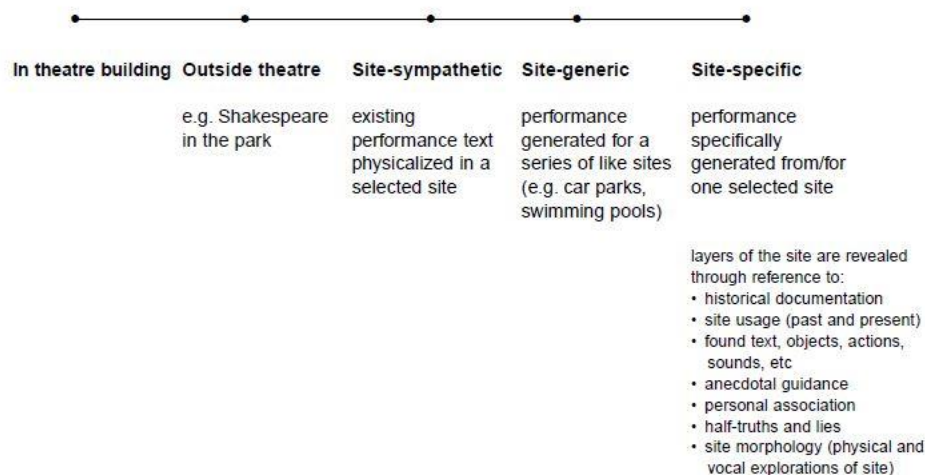
A dynamic relationship is forged in the practice and performance of many Land Art works that enables a relationship wherein landscape is: ‘sensed and represented as a creative and ephemeral force in its own right’ (Wylie, 2007: p.141). What this reaffirms is the sense that there is a broad spectrum of work that may come under the banner of theatrical or performative acts of landscaping.

The temporality of some Land Art and the ways in which land art is documented raises important points about the relationship between landscape, performance and documentation. An example is Richard Long’s *A Line Made by Walking*, wherein the artist made an imprint on a grassy field by walking over the same space repeatedly, documenting the action of his performance on the surface of the land. The work is encountered by the audience through observing a documentary photograph which shows the line made, not by their experiencing the act of walking with or the land on which it took place. This raises interesting questions, as Pearson usefully asks: ‘as we look at the oft-reproduced photograph of *A Line Made by Walking*, where is the performance? Out there or here in the gallery? And where is the audience? Was anyone present at the time, the photograph being an incidental record of the event? Or were we [the audience in the gallery] always the intended audience? (Pearson, 2010: p.34). It is clear, then, that the ‘audience’ relationship in this kind of work can be constituted in different ways, not just through live performance, but through an engagement and interaction with materials presented by the artist (documentation). This complex relationship recurs in each of the following case studies.

In my understanding, landscape performances, then, should not be those that convey an

idea of the landscape which is projected onto it throughout the performance for the audience to interoperate. Rather, landscape performances are those that provide the space for and facilitate an audience's participation in the process of making the landscape through action and embodiment. Rather than spectators to a projection or representation of landscape, the audience are involved as participants in the performative process of experiencing and shaping the landscape. Performance as a creative enterprise is positioned as a valid landscaping practice, just as: walking, cycling, gardening (among other actions) are. A piece of landscape performance can therefore be defined as that which enables or demands the embodied involvement of its participants in the landscape.

This field of performance practice and research is already complicated by a plethora of definitions (aside from my own) that attempt to explain the diverse ways that performance engages with place. Mike Pearson's *Site-Specific Performance* (2010) gives a detailed account of many different types of work associated with the term. Pearson's explanation of site-specific performance centres on the 'non-hierarchical interrelationship between site and performance' (Rowlands, 2017: p.91) and stresses that this kind of work is marked by a dramaturgy in which place is no longer a backdrop but a performative element in itself. Although, 'the term "site-specific" has now become diluted, and used indiscriminately by critics and some practitioners to represent any theatre outside of the traditional building' (Rowlands, 2017: p.91), many other associated terms have emerged in an attempt to account for a more nuanced understanding of the ways that place has been integrated as a component part of performance. Wrights & Sites member Stephen Hodge presented an illustrative diagram that helpfully laid out a range of associated terminology during a presentation given by the company at the Performance of Place conference which was held at the University of Birmingham in May 2001 (and cited in Wilkie, 2002). The diagram distinguishes between different theatre practices based on their relationship to place:



Whilst this diagram offers a useful reference point, Wilkie's acknowledgment that questions seem to arise for performances that 'seem to fall somewhere between the "site-generic" and "site-specific" points on the scale' (2002, p.150) seems to acknowledge a broader difficulty with definitions in general. That is, where there are boundaries there are always exceptions that disrupt ridged categorisation. Whilst helpful in differentiating between particular aspects of the work, they necessarily do so at the expense of others which fall outside such boundaries.

The question of why I choose to risk complicating things further by introducing the concept of landscape performance into the equation is, then, legitimate. My definition stems from a different kind of relationship not encompassed by the existing categories. Each of my case studies might be placed within different categories on Hodges spectrum, some more comfortably than others. NVA's *Speed of Light* could be understood as site-generic within Hodges paradigm as the work was transferred from its original location of Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh and adapted for a number of other locations, including: Yokohama, Manchester and the Ruhr. Simon Whiteheads work, however, fits best within the site-specific model as it is 'generated from/for one selected site' (Wilkie, 2002: p.150). *Wrights & Sites* own *Mis-guides* are difficult to fit within any of the existing categories in the spectrum as exactly where and how the exercises are carried out entirely depends on the person carrying out the exercises. There may be diverse types of interaction between site and performance.

Landscape is a term which offers an alternative way of categorising this kind of creative work. Landscape can be conceptualised as an ongoing process and, as such, it is not only manifested through visual engagement but also through a tactile immersion in the physical environment. By emphasising the different types of interaction that happen between human and non-human actors, the landscape concept can help inform performance work that provides opportunities for audiences to interact. This is why I introduce 'landscape performance' as a term to denote performances that encourage different phenomenological engagements with environments, their representation and their materiality. Landscape performance is more focused on the way a performance implicates the audience in the action of the place in which it set. Some descriptions of site-based practice focus on the extent to which the performance draws attention to particular features of the place in which it is performed. Cliff McLucas, for example described how a sites present a number of 'offerings' that can be used as theatrical foundation. In an interview with Nick Kaye (1996), along with co-creator Mike Pearson, he described how the work of Brith Gof engaged with the company's selected sites:

particular and unavoidable history
particular use (a cinema, a slaughterhouse)
particular formality (shape, proportion, height, disposition of
architectural elements, etc.)
particular political, cultural and social context
(Kaye, 1996: 213)

Hodge's diagram offers a visual representation of the hierarchical relationship that moves from superficial engagement across many sites to a profound engagement with one site in particular; it moves from Shakespeare in the park to work which references the offerings highlighted by McLucas. The term landscape performance re-orientates focus towards the kinds of physical engagement a performance can encourage in an audience. Landscape performance is not a ridged category – a piece understood to be landscape performance is not denied the possibility of belonging in some other spectrum or category, only that it contains within it a particular quality that I am interested in investigating. So, whilst the work may or may not be produced from/for one particular site, to qualify as landscape performance it must involve participants in actions that are

particular to the location. The work must involve a particular quality of engagement where the visual and the tactile come in to play, where the audience are immersed in the physical environment through the carrying out of tasks. The difference is between watching characters who are fishing at the side of the stream to having a rod in hand standing in the shallows.

In order to explain the relationship between my definitions of landscape theatre/performance and site-specific performance further, I will provide a hypothetical example, taking a site connected to a sense of observing: Insh Marshes, Speyside, a popular destination for bird-watching in Scotland. A site like this is open to many different types of performance. Here, I will lay out two possible examples, one that I would term as site-specific and the other as landscape performance.

Two separate theatre companies decide to create a site-specific performance about the Insh Marshes. The first company creates a work that involves exploring and enacting the particular history, function or architecture of that site. The audience observe as the performers enact and discuss various bird watching characters that go about their business in different ways. The audience encounter a performance that touches on the meanings and relationships that emerge from the site, but they do so through a theatre company, by watching a representation. This performance may well be considered site-specific theatre as it is performed at a selected location and the content of the performance is specifically about that location. However, this work would not constitute landscape performance. The second company visit the same site and are also interested in enacting and exploring the particular history, functions and architectures of that site. This company, though, involve their audience in their work. They guide them and invite them to bird-watch alongside them; they implicate the audience in the landscape. Here the audience encounter the landscape by doing it, by embodying the action of that particular locale. The performances require the audience to get involved in the on-going performance of the landscape. This 'involvement' might take many shapes and be initiated in many different ways.

The distinction then becomes clear, site-specific performances need only to engage with their chosen locations' inherent history, subject matter or function to be specific to it, but in order to be considered landscape performance they need to involve their audience, they need to allow a space for participation in the landscape as an on-going process which they help to establish and contribute to. Landscape performances must be fundamentally site-specific as the specific interactions of people and chosen location are their subject matter, material and action. Where site-specific performances may be open to interpretation through the lens of landscape performance, the distinction comes from the requirement that landscape theatre and performance facilitates a process in which the intention is for the audience to take part in the action and on-going making of landscape.

Landscape performance then, within a phenomenological frame, is considered to be an 'embodied cultural practice' of landscape. To go to a piece of landscape performance, therefore, is not to observe an object from a fixed point of view but to experience and participate in the journey of its construction. Mike Pearson highlights that to study landscape from a phenomenological approach involves 'attentive analysis of, and quite often, direct personal participation in, embodied acts of landscaping' (2010 p.95). He also states that: 'the practices of land may be instructive for further performative activities, often themselves innovating participation.' (ibid: p.26). Artistic landscape performance works may adopt Wylie's proposals and invite its audience to walk, accompany others on a walk, experience, enable others to experience affects, or to relate experiences after having walked. The approaches might be purposeful, discursive, conceptual, pre-considered, and choreographed. Landscape performance is about the facilitation of a process, an enabling of participation in and embodiment of the landscape.

As I have reiterated throughout this chapter, landscape is not something which is fixed or stable. Therefore, as the non-representational cultural geographers I have cited have affirmed, these performances explore particular relationships which are unstable and in flux. Landscape

performance can only account for *an* and not *the* embodiment of the landscape. In other words, landscape performances should not be considered as works that attempt to appropriate a landscape by suggesting a number of fixed meanings, they should never determine or portray to an audience that they claim to know the meaning of a particular location; they should instead acknowledge that the work is an encounter and experience of the landscape that aims to open up and invite participation in the mutual construction of that landscape at that particular moment.

As this review demonstrates, the study of landscape has a long and complex history which encompasses multiple competing epistemologies. I argue that phenomenological and non-representational conceptions of landscape – in the way that they articulate the importance of performance in the creation of landscape – are useful in the analysis of certain performance works. These ideas form the basis of a type of work I am calling landscape performance, specific examples of which are investigated in the following chapters. Whilst this chapter has articulated that performance is aligned to the phenomenological conceptions of landscape, it is also clear that such a conception also reveals the difficulties of documenting this kind of performance. In the following chapters, this thesis explores how different kinds of documentary materials seem to articulate different epistemological approaches to landscape and some documents demonstrate the potential to encompass, oscillate between, or transcend approaches. The study shows how existing debates about the conception of landscape can help to inform understandings of landscape performance documentation.

As the thesis progresses, it moves from artist-led documents (that is, documents produced by the artists) to more participatory forms of documentation (documentation which is co-produced or fully realised by the audience). In Chapter Two, I discuss how Angus Farquhar's blog constructs an alternative landscape to the one experienced by the participants of the *Speed of Light* performance it refers to. It demonstrates how he constructs a landscape that is deeply influenced by a personal narrative significantly influenced by masculine stereotypes. In the third chapter I explore how Simon

Whitehead's performances and documentation (photography, drawings and sound recordings) support a more unfixed/fluid understanding of landscape. It also explores the potential of Whitehead's audio recordings to signal more immersive approach to documenting landscape performance and investigates the implications this has for understanding how landscape is represented in both the performance and documentation. In the fourth chapter I discuss how Wrights & Site's *Mis-guides* invite participants to draw attention to cultural values, attitudes and meanings from the detritus found on a walk, using such materials to describe the landscape through nostalgic anecdotes. In this final case study, the work highlights the ways that the *Mis-guides* encourage participants to generate their own landscape performance experiences as well as their own *Mis-guide* documents. This work shows how the conception of landscape can operate as a guide for generating different kinds of documentation which is much more focused on tactile engagement with the land than with analysing its features in photographic form.

Conversely, the thesis also draws out a number of examples of documents which seem to challenge these representational presentations of landscape. In Chapter Two, I explore the limits of photography to account for the experience of climbing Arthur's Seat in the dark, the primary action of NVA's *Speed of Light*. The third chapter highlights Simon Whitehead's soundscapes and discusses how they allow participants to encounter aspects of the landscape experience through sound recordings of the artist as he interacts with his chosen environments. In the fourth chapter I undertake a selection of exercises from *Wrights & Sites A Mis-guide to Anywhere* (2006) and in doing so I explore how instructions can lead to re-enactments of past events that draw attention to the ways that previous performances inform and shape our future experience of landscape. As my working methods move towards more participatory forms the study questions the effect/affect of my own enactment of the documentation. The work shifts to a more somatic experience which is distinct from looking at or reading the other forms of documentation which are the primary focus of the earlier case studies. My work on Wrights & Sites embraces the autobiographical and the

subjective nature of documentation and brings my own experiences and narratives into conversation.

Overall, my analysis of these documentations emphasise how certain cultural values, attitudes and meanings are being communicated and, in some cases, utilised for promotional purposes. It articulates in detail the working methods and processes of landscape performance makers, drawing attention to particular approaches which stimulate debate about the role and function of documentation. As the thesis progresses, I move from documentary strategies which seem to rely on landscape as a 'way of seeing' and towards documents which offer opportunities to develop a different kind of landscape engagement through performance. The discourse on the competing epistemologies of landscape studies informs the research throughout the whole thesis, providing useful reference points for distinct theoretical explorations. This thesis contributes to the aforementioned body of literature by exploring new methodological approaches generated through the synthesis of theoretical frameworks and practices from different disciplines both in and out with theatre and performance. By drawing together a range of ideas and practices that are at the heart of landscape research, I am able to highlight the particular methods used by landscape performance makers to account for the complex relationships their work stimulates in their performance documentation.

DOCUMENTATION

Theatre, by its very nature, is an art of the present moment.

(McAuley, 1994: p.184)

Absent flesh *does* ghost bones.

(Schneider, 2011: p.102)

It would be difficult to base any research project which analyses performance documentation without first positioning this study in relation to the diverse and detailed tensions that arise from the complicated relationship that documentation shares with notions like *ephemerality* and other closely related (almost synonymous) terminology like *transience*, *liveness* and *disappearance*. This is primarily because any discussion about what documentation might *be*, what it might *do*, and how it might be *used* are inherently accompanied by what Matthew Reason calls 'a mirroring, complimentary and contradictory discourse' of 'performance and disappearance and transience' (2006: p.21). Much of these debates have been well rehearsed within performance studies, summarised and articulated particularly well already by both Reason (2006) and Schneider (2011). However, as with most lively fields of academia, a certain amount of debate still operates around these topics and this chapter sets out to draw attention to some of these differences. The result is that the field continues to stimulate interesting developments as new technologies (see Deacon⁶), documentary strategies (see Sant⁷) and artistic responses (see Campbell⁸) offer new pathways to deviate from predominant or established positions. My own work contributes to these debates through an in-depth examination of how and why contemporary artists apply different

⁶ Robin Deacon's essay 'explores the role of contemporary recording devices, such as smart phones, in the increasing rupture of the classroom and art school studio as private space' (2016: p.114).

⁷ Tony Sant's editorial 'Interdisciplinary approaches to documenting performance' highlights 'a new generation of performance practitioners' who are 'becoming increasingly involved in exploring the practical methods of creating preserving and archiving documents of performance' (2014: p.3).

⁸ Lee Campbell article reports on 'article reports on a selection of practice-based research projects within the canon of Performance Art that use non-traditional forms of performance documentation to propose that bringing together visual art and performance-related discourses is helpful in articulating the document' (2014: p.35).

documentation strategies. Focusing on the documentary strategies of landscape performance makers in particular, it makes apparent the problems, challenges and contradictions associated with creating documentary materials. A variety of theories associated with the study of landscape help to inform my analysis of particular examples of performance documentation, offering distinctive insights on how and to what effect documentation of performance work is circulated and disseminated.

This section has a number of specific areas to cover. It will discuss in what circumstances and in what ways performance documentation can be considered 'live,' especially given the principal acceptance of the idea that performance is of the moment, constituted by its disappearance; that 'performance originals disappear as fast as they are made' (Schechner, 1985: p.50). It will consider what implications there are for performance when 'no notation, no reconstruction, no film or videotape recording can keep them' (ibid). I also want to question whether the only motivation to document really is to 'save' the un-saveable or whether the parameters of documentation might be better shifted towards more creative and experimental means. Finally, and importantly, I want to explore documentation within a frame of landscape and explore the possibilities available in attempts to document the land and also explain ways that landscape may be considered a document.

Firstly, as McAuley's aphorism indicates, life is constantly passing into history and in no art-form is this idea personified better than in theatre and live performance. Notable practitioners like Stanislavski made attempts to define what performance is as a phenomenon as early as 1924 (when *My Life in Art* was first published in English), he stated that: 'a work of art born on the stage lives only for a moment, and no matter how beautiful it may be it cannot be commanded to stay with us' (Stanislavski, 1987). However, it was with the emergence of Performance Studies as a distinct field (differentiated from the literary study of dramatic texts) that conversations about the *essential*

*properties of performance*⁹ became a prevailing area of research. A focus on what it means to be *live* has preoccupied theatre and performance since the late 1960s. In the chapter 'A Small History of Ephemerality' in her book *Performance Remains* (2011) Rebecca Schneider highlights the words of prominent dancer Marcia B. Siegel: 'dance exists at a perpetual vanishing point. [...] It is an event that it disappears in the very act of materialising' (p.1).

It is unsurprising that ephemerality has been established as essential to live performance given the wealth of contributions from notable figures within the theatre, practitioners as well as academics that have supported this position over the last fifty years. Indeed, in 1974 Richard Schechner wrote that theatre is 'evanescent', stating further that 'it is an event characterised by ephemerality and immediacy' (1974: p.118). Additionally, Eugenio Barba has explained that, ontologically, 'the theatre's nature is ephemeral' (1990: p.96). The repetition of this truism within theatre and performance has been played out time and again by both performance scholars like Bernard Beckerman who states 'theatre is nothing if not spontaneous. It occurs. It happens. The novel can be put away, taken up, reread. Not theatre. It keeps slipping between one's fingers' (Bernard Beckerman, 1979: 129). This is backed-up and perpetuated further by practitioners like Peter Brook who writes that a performance 'is an event for that moment in time, for that [audience] in that place - and it's gone. Gone without a trace' (Melzer, 1995: 148).

The convention that unifies all of the above propositions is that performance cannot be repeated and only exists in the moment. In other words, it only happens *in the now*. It has been claimed that this is a unique quality of live performance, a quality that distinguishes it from other art forms. Many have argued that live performance has no corporeal existence beyond the event itself, as Thornton Wilder highlights when he states that, 'the supremacy of the theatre derives from the fact that it is always "now" on the stage' (in Bryer, 1962: p.72). It is from the position that performance is seen as ephemeral, that it evades permanence, that many have drawn its cultural

⁹ This is a term borrowed from Abbott, Jones and Ross (2009) which features in their article 'Redefining the Performing Arts Archive'

significance. And yet, the supremacy of the notion of the ephemeral and its consistent repetition within performance studies should not go unchallenged or scrutinised (and indeed it hasn't). So, how are we to understand ephemerality and what does it mean in relation to theatrical performance? Debates around *liveness* and *disappearance* offer useful access points to thinking about ephemerality and go some way to explaining what the concept actually means in relation to the live performance event.

LIVENESS AND DISAPPEARANCE

The words 'live' and 'liveness' are used to describe how performance takes place '...in a "now" understood as singular, immediate, and vanishing' (Schneider, 2011: p.87). The rubrics (as Schneider calls them) of live and liveness have been afforded great attention in performance studies. The belief that anything is inherently possible *in the moment*, in the risk that comes with immediacy and spontaneity, also contributes greatly to the idea of performance as an ephemeral art form. It is true, that for all the planning and rehearsal that a company may put into a particular production that there is always the possibility of intervention from things outside the company's control. There is an inherent risk which is reserved for live performance. Other conditions can be controlled. Space can be arranged, expectations mediated to a point, but the fact remains that *in the moment* of performance, anything can happen. In the *Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance* Paul Allain and Jen Harvey outline these key ideas:

Liveness describes a quality of live performance – the sense that it is happening here now. It is an important idea because it apparently distinguishes live performance from recorded performance based media such as film and television, indicating that live performance has some intrinsic qualitative and even political difference from other forms of performance. [...] Performances liveness is exciting because it cultivates a sense of *presence*, and because risk is unavoidable where accident cannot be edited out (as it can in recorded media). Performances liveness is social because it produces meaning in a dynamic process rather in the fixed and passive form that recorded media seem to present.

(2006: p.168-169)

Of course, theories of the 'live' and 'liveness' are not without their complications and critiques, as the above quote makes clear, many draw a distinction between live performance and other mediatised forms as binary opposites.¹⁰ This position has found forceful resistance from Philip Auslander (1999) in *Liveness: Performance In a Mediatized Culture*. Auslander challenges the binary opposition separating the 'live' and the 'mediatised' by stating that performance has become progressively less independent from mediatised forms. For Auslander, live performance is already embedded within systems and industry structures of production and re-production. He contends that live performance is the category of cultural production which is affected the most by the dominance of the media:

It is not just because it is not at all clear that live performance does not have a distinctive ontology, but also because it is not a question of performances entering into the economy of reproduction, since it has always been there. My argument is that the very concept of live performance presupposes that of reproduction – that the live can exist only within an economy of reproduction.'

(1999, p.54)

This is why, in his opinion, it is so important to begin any debate on the position of live performance in relation to the mediatised culture. He highlights his intention to, 'exploit and deconstruct' (1999: p.4) the notion of an oppositional relationship between the live and the mediatised. It is difficult to draw distinctions to describe what exactly constitutes 'live' and lines are often blurred when discussions of mediatised forms of entertainment are introduced. Schneider highlights this when she states: 'Of a broadcast we read that "live" refers to an event transmitted at the time of occurrence, not from a recording. While a recording itself can be live: a recording made of a live musical event is a "live recording"' (2002: p.90). And of course there are a number of performance companies that explore the role of media within their performance works. The

¹⁰ It is important to note that both Allain and Harvey are aware of and attentive to these arguments and discuss them in the *Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance*.

Wooster Group's *Hamlet*¹¹ is a long running show which explores not only the role that video documentation can play within live performance but also how video technology steamed live on stage can offer multiple view points to an audience, generating different dynamics, that although are partially explored through digital media are no less live than their other work. The digital can be live insofar is that it can be transmitted *in the moment* to its audience via satellite (there are multiple examples of this ranging from live news broadcasts, live sports video and commentary, and perhaps more relevantly in relation to this work the transmission of the National Theatre Live productions.¹² Performances such as *Hamlet* by the Wooster Group or *Kitchen* by Gob Squad also seek to blur the distinctions between what constitutes live by incorporating digital media live on stage as a core aspect of their dramaturgy. In these instances the actors are present but they are made visible mainly through the multiple projections of a live camera feeds and presented to the audience through a number of screens. This is an active mixing of live bodies and video technology that complicates any simple distinction between the live and the mediated.

Auslander also questioned whether an audience's perception of a live event is different to the experience of mediated forms of entertainment. He argues that there is no difference between an audience that is watching a live body on stage or a television image on screen; what the recipients receive is always in the present moment, thus the form is insignificant and the emphasis is placed on the 'moment' of interaction, instead. The structure of Auslander's argument centres on an attempt to prove that the ways people perceive the televisual are much the same as in live performance. He states that an audience perceives simultaneously in both live performance and recorded forms:

¹¹ I attended the Wooster Group's *Hamlet* in 2013 at the Royal Lyceum Theatre as part of the Edinburgh International Festival.

¹² National Theatre Live launched in June 2009 with a broadcast of the National Theatre production of *Phèdre* which was filmed in front of a live audience in the theatre. Following the success of the project the National Theatre have continued to broadcast over 40 productions from theatres around the UK. Their website states that their live broadcasts have allowed their work to reach a much wider audience, having 'been experienced by over 5.5 million people in over 2,000 venues around the world, including over 650 venues in the UK alone' (National Theatre Live, 2017).

Regardless of whether the image conveyed by television is live or recorded (and, as Stanley Cavell (1982: 86) reminds us on television there is “no sensuous distinction between the live and the repeat or replay”) its production as a televisual image occurs only in the present moment.

(1999, p.44)

Auslander contends that the notion of ‘live’ only exists because media created an opposition to it, ‘on this basis, the historical relationship of liveness and mediatisation must be seen as a relation of dependence and imbrications rather than opposition’ (1999: p.53). In the preface to the second edition of the work he explained that the aim of the original publication was to raise ‘trenchant questions’ (2008: p.xi) about liveness, a concept which he described as ‘central to the project of theatre and performance studies’ (ibid) but that had ‘somehow escaped direct examination in those fields’ (ibid). If Auslander is correct and mediated forms of performance are perceived as equally ‘live’ in their perception, this would complicate this relationship enforcing the inclusion of various gradients of ‘liveness’ that nonetheless remain ‘live’ in some way. Interestingly, Reason proposes that the sense of ‘liveness’ starts to emerge as a commodity in itself, an accolade to be proud of, ‘...declarations of ephemerality frequently position different forms of live performance as if in open competition, each vying to assert that one is the more ephemeral than the other’ (Reason, 2006: p.11). The notion of liveness becomes more than descriptive of the form ‘more than something desirable but also a manifesto of intent and primary purpose’ (ibid). In other words, liveness becomes a constituting aspect that makes performance what it is. The inclusion of new media and technology complicates that position and opens it up for questioning.

‘the work, once performed, disappears forever’
(Pavis, 1992: 28)

Debates around concepts like *transience* and *liveness* have not nearly been as provocative in the field as another influential concept: *disappearance*. As has been stated thus far, much emphasis is placed on the ephemeral qualities of performance by theatre makers and scholars, and disappearance further reinforces the positive ideological valuation of ephemerality in performance

(see Reason, 2006: p.20). The term 'disappearance' has been refigured in different ways to put emphasis on the inability of performance to be repeated. Adrian Heathfield further draws on the idea of disappearance when he states that performance exists at the 'instance of disappearance' (2000: 106). Rebecca Schneider highlights the powerful effect the discourse on disappearance had on performance studies when she states that: 'It was as if disappearance became a kind of intellectual kerosene fuelling the flames through which more traditional theatre studies – studies focused on the dramatic script for example – seemed to struggle to signal' (2011: p.95).

An influential figure concerning the idea of disappearance is Peggy Phelan who, in *Unmarked* (1993), stimulated debates on the ontology of performance art in direct relation to documentation. Phelan places significant emphasis on the irreproducible nature of the live event. Her work is widely recognised as the 'cornerstone to performance studies' (Roms, 2008) and her maxim that:

Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance.

(1993: p.146)

Has become 'one of the most prominent and frequently repeated expressions of performance culture' (Reason, 2006: p.12). Through her discussion of *disappearance* Phelan brings documentation to the forefront of the debates surrounding the nature of performance. Phelan argues that it is in the properties of transience, liveness and in particular disappearance, in its inherent ephemerality, that live performance manages to resist commodification. The idea is that other art forms such as photography, painting and sculpture (amongst others) generate 'originals' which are easily copied, replicated and sold within a capitalist economy. Phelan contends that live performance resists such processes of replication; that performance cannot be reproduced and therefore gains a qualitative value which is quite distinct from other art forms.

‘performance honours the idea that a limited number of people in a specific time/space frame can have an experience of value which leave no visible trace afterward’

(ibid, 149).

The term disappearance is used to suggest that it is performance’s intrinsic ephemerality that allows it to resist commodification, ‘Performance clogs the smooth machinery of reproductive representation necessary to the circulation of capital... [because] ...it resists the balanced circulations of finance. It saves nothing; it only spends’ (1993: p.148). As Adrian Heathfield and Andrew Quick state: ‘as Peggy Phelan has argued, the distinguishing (and radical) feature of performance is its very ephemerality; its disappearance evades the knowing and commodifying clutch of representation’ (2000:p.1).

Phelan's ideas on disappearance have significant implications for the ways performance documentation is understood and approached. Phelan suggests that performance documentation is fundamentally incompatible with performance's own ontology by suggesting that 'performance's being [...] becomes itself through disappearance' (Phelan, 1993: p.146). Phelan proposes a view of performance art as that which is essentially un-documentable and resistant to cultural imitation and economic circulation. Further, performance art becomes something else (other than performance) in the documentation and loses its political potency once it enters the currency of representation. Although Phelan’s focus is directed towards performance in relation to commodity exchange, her work seems to reject performance documentation as ‘valid’ representation for live performance. Particularly because it: ‘rests upon a practical and empirical statement of non-reproducibility’ (Reason, 2006: p.13). Phelan presents the position that documentation ultimately cannot account for the experience of an original performance and therefore fails as a representation of that past event, which perhaps gives an indication for why many have taken her work to denote a view against the very act of documenting. Phelan is particularly keen to distance herself from this reading of her work:

I was not saying, although I've heard people say I *was* saying, that we must not have photographs, videos or sound documentations of performance. And quite happy to have those.... If I can paraphrase myself reasonably successfully, 'performance betrays its own ontology to the degree to which it participates in the economy of reproduction.' That's not exactly it, but it's close. This word 'betrayal' has been a bit of a problem, I think I was read as a high priest seeing 'we must not have betrayal!'

(2008: p.135)

From the above quote we learn that Phelan's original work attempted only to draw attention to the fact that performance documents cannot account for the experience of ephemerality and as consequence cannot be repeated and therefore resists commodification through multiple copies. Phelan was not calling for the prevention of performance documentation as an act in itself. Some though have drawn on the concept of disappearance to argue for not documenting live performance. In 'Eventful Evidence' Heike Roms states that whilst 'Phelan has contributed significantly to making performance art the paradigmatic performance genre of the last decade' (2008: p.4), her work has actually 'validated' and aided those who have attempted to justify the absence of performance art from traditional art history. Roms also warns that a position of performance that premises itself firmly on the positive enforcement of disappearance, those that position themselves as essentially anti-documentary,¹³ are in danger of omitting and eventually losing altogether their work from history. A similar concern was highlighted by Michelle Potter who stated that, 'without efforts to preserve history and heritage of the art form it will forever languish as trivial and not worthy of serious research' (2001). It is true that there will probably always be some academics and practitioners who will view documentation simply as a poor representation, unable to properly account for an ephemeral performance event which has passed; who will understand performance documentation as inadequate corporal materials that should simply be forgotten or

¹³ Here, Roms is not referring to Phelan herself (as I have already explained Phelan has distanced herself from the portrayal of an 'anti-documenter'); rather Roms is warning against those who use Phelan's works as an excuse or legitimate reason for not documenting.

left behind.¹⁴ Of course, Heike Roms' work – and in particular the *What's Welsh for Performance?* online archive – testifies to the desire to document and historicise performance art practices as well as offering a sound argument as to why it is in fact vital to do so.

A connected concern is present for those who are interested in the preservation of certain kinds of landscape as urban development's risk covering over and replacing sites of special scientific interest (SSSI), sometimes erasing markers of prior historical activities, or destroying a settled ecosystem. An prominent example features the construction of Donald Trump's golf course in Aberdeenshire in the North East of Scotland where the development which involved installing of fairways, drainage and irrigation systems along the coast, 'affected the natural morphology of Menie's dunes and interfered with natural processes' (Sharman, 2018), reducing most of its important geomorphological features to 'fragments' (ibid). Such activities have led to demonstrations or other acts of disruption that seek to preserve the landscape and prevent it from disappearing altogether under the pressure of business interests. In the case of Trump's golf course, there were a number of resistance movements to the development: in 2010 Molly Forbes a local resident attempted to take Trump to court; Aberdeenshire residents got organised through the brilliant 'Tripping Up Trump' campaign targeting the local council and national government over the plans; In 2011 the Aberdeenshire residence set up the Tripping Up Trump campaign organised a march dubbed The March of Menie; subsequent protests were organised and undertaken by groups like Friends of the Earth Scotland and RISE (Respect, Independence, Socialism and Environmentalism). Disappearance, then, is a concept which links discussions of documentation and landscape.

So far, the main emphasis of this study has focused on the ways that ephemerality, through transience, liveness and disappearance, is viewed as a positive and integral component of performance. However, in relation to the practice of documenting performance, disappearance

¹⁴ By *left behind* I mean: left un-recontextualised, sorted or disseminated.

becomes the main point of concern. This is why we document, 'if we do not document performance it disappears; we document performance to stop it disappearing' (Reason, 2006: p.21). Discussions on disappearance – and Phelan's in particular – have generated a discourse of 'saving' live performance, as Reason highlights: 'Fear of transience, of the forgotten equating to the valueless, has long sparked practical, social and academic urge to "save" live performance from disappearance' (2006: p.23). According to Hal Foster the impulse to archive has been very much alive since the mid-20th century, an idea further explored by performance scholar Rebecca Schneider (2002) who states that the idea of the archive has become so imbedded in our culture that 'we understand ourselves relative to the remains we accumulate' (p.100). Roms argues that documents help to historicize performance, they establish 'access points' which allow 'an insight into *what happened, or possibly what we imagine may have happened*, when artists created performance work' (2008: p.3). The advantage of having such access points is clear; they help us understand and evaluate the significance of performance events and their social/cultural relevance in a number of different contexts. The complex and ever present question is how we identify and construct these access points. Roms sets up the dichotomy of documentation as either reliable or unreliable as *evidence* of the live performance event to which it refers.

This correlates with the work of Amelia Jones, who highlights that a photograph can act as evidence of a live performance event. She states that a picture makes the ideas (if not the experience) of the performance available, not only to those who witnessed the event but to a wider audience that encounters it through its physical documentation. She further states that: 'the body art event needs the photograph to confirm its having happened; the photograph needs the body art event as an ontological 'anchor' of its indexicality' (Jones, 1997: p.16). Documentation often presents a 'piece of the real world' (Auslander, 2006: p.84), a moment of the live event with the audience watching it, captured in a still image. Jones elevates the role of documentation. She states that documentation is an important factor in constituting the original performance; that the performance itself relies on the documentary photograph as *proof* of its very existence but further

to this, the images allow the ideas and intentions of the artist to be disseminated (with a certain level of mediation and control) to a wider audience than those that experienced it in its original form. The document is almost an extension of the event itself. In this sense, Jones challenges the ontological 'priority' of live performance, that people come to *know* the performance *through* the document and not the ephemeral event itself.

Philip Auslander rejects the notion of documentation as an access point as well as offering up an alternative approach to understanding performance documentation. Auslander presents a view of documentation as 'eventful rather than evidentiary' (Roms, 2008). In *The Performativity of Performance Documentation* (2006) Auslander sets up two opposing categories of performance documentation and then explores them in relation to examples. The two categories are *documentary* and *theatrical*. His second category of performance documentation, what he calls theatrical documentation, is made for an audience in its own right. That is, the documentation itself is the artwork and provides the only experience of the artwork offered to an audience. Auslander explains the distinction by stating that:

These are cases in which performances were staged solely to be photographed or filmed and had no meaningful prior existence as autonomous events presented to audiences. The space of the document (whether visual or audio/visual) thus becomes the only space in which the performance occurs.

(Auslander, 2003: p.84)

Auslander uses the photograph of Yves Klein's *Leap into the Void* (1960) which seemingly shows the artist falling or jumping from a second story window into the street below, as an example of theatrical documentation. The image gives the impression that the artist is moments away from an imminent impact with the concrete ground below him. In actuality the picture was a composite of two different images merged in a dark room which erased the safety net used by the artist in the making of the work. Auslander compounds his position by stating that:

the pleasures of a work 'are available from the documentation and therefore do not depend on whether an audience witnessed the original event... [or even that] ...they may not even depend on whether the event actually happened.

(Auslander, p.9)

This idea has credence and is practically demonstrated through the work of Hayley Newman, whose *Connotations – Performance images (1994-1998)* (Heathfield, 2004) explores the potential and limits of documentation in an artistic context. Newman presents a provocative approach to documentation as she generated a number of photographic documents of staged performance art events that never actually happened (or at least, not in the way she presented them to have happened). Newman presented a number of documentary photographs of these staged performances in a gallery with small explanations of the ideas beside them. In other words, Newman created theatrical documentation and presented it as documentary documentation. Auslander's position is that documentation is an event *in itself* which is interesting because it highlights that documents have potential artistic qualities which can be explored beyond its ephemeral event. However his rendering of the live event as inconsequential or even unnecessary is provocative but questionable, for, as Reason states: 'documentation that tells the whole story is not documentation, but the whole story; not recording, but the thing itself. [...] A documentation of a live event is partial and incomplete. Consequently, that which is missing (the unrepresented, unrepeatable and liminal) re-inscribes the continuing absence of the ephemeral performance' (Reason: p.27).

Auslander disagrees with the ontological priority of the live event by stating that documented performance is performed as an end in itself. Furthermore, Auslander insists that documentation is in fact the 'final product, through which it [the performance] will be circulated and with which it will be identified... (Auslander, 2006: p.3). In other words, performance is only part of a wider process in which the final result (or event) is documentation. Given the tendency for art institutions and galleries to present documentation of past performances in an artistic context, Auslander's stance that documentation 'does not simply generate image/statements that describe

autonomous performance and state that it occurred' in favour of the idea that 'it produces an event as a performance' (Auslander, 2006: p.5) is well reasoned. Whilst documents may offer artistic potential if they offer totality then they are no longer documents but works of art in their own right, completely separate from that which was its stimulus. It is however true that documentation often becomes a 'stand in' for the performances themselves. Jacques Le Goff describes this Western truism quite simply by noting that history has been composed of documents because 'the document is what remains' (1996: p.xvii).

Theoretically, Auslander's stance works against Phelan's on disappearance. For Phelan documentability can be seen as an antonym to the live. It is precisely the fact that documentation cannot be captured which defines that it *as* live. Auslander however, works against this position, he refuses to allow immediateness to stand as an antonym for liveness. Auslander is not particularly concerned with the idea that performance documentation is a representation because he states that documents are live in their own right, they have their own *liveness*. For Phelan, live performance 'occurs over a time which will not be repeated' (1993: p.147). For Auslander, conversely, the live is in some senses always already re-enactment (though not record) in that: 'live performance is now a re-creation of itself at one remove, filtered through its own mediatised reproductions' (See Schneider, 2002: p. 91).

PERFORMANCE AS DOCUMENT

Another approach to disappearance and documentation is offered through the work of scholars like Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks (2001) and Dee Heddon (2002), who present a view of documentation as an extension of the original performance. They explore the idea that documentation can be used to re-contextualise the past and bring further engagement with the performance work in the present as second and third-order performance. Here performance is seen as a continuing process. Performance lives on in its documents. Performances constantly re-emerge with each new engagement and interaction with documentation. In 'Performing the archive:

following in the footsteps' (2002) Dee Heddon sets out to explore the possibilities of performance documentation through an exploration of Mike Pearson's performance *Bubbling Tom* (2000), a performance which she was not present at but wished she had been. Heddon would like to move away from the notion that documentation becomes something *other* than performance after the event. Instead, she wonders whether performance documentation can become '*some(thing) other (than) performance*' (2002: p.4); in other words, whether a performance has to end after the event, perhaps performance can continue in (interaction with) its documentation. Heddon actively works through the ideas presented by Pearson and Shanks, that:

'The object of documentation then is to devise models for the re-contextualisation of performance as text and as second-order performance, as a creative process in the present and not as a speculation of past meaning or intention...'

(Pearson and Shanks: p.59).

Pearson and Shanks oppose Phelan's position that performance documentation is something ontologically different to the performance itself and yet they do not go as far as Auslander in claiming that the original performance has an entirely independent ontology from and is of no importance to its documents. Documentation is seen here as a valid part of performance's own ontology. They offer up the position of performance documentation as having active agency in the work. Although performance is ephemeral, traces of this remain in its documents and are waiting to be reanimated and re-contextualised by new audiences in the present in a kind of second or even third-order performance. In her work, Heddon attempted to create a third-order performance of the piece originally created by Mike Pearson. She reflects that:

Whilst Pearson's *Bubbling Tom* was a temporal, live performance, its passing does not mean that it is gone, that it is over and done with, that it is not still alive. For in its (literal and metaphorical) place remain deep pulsating resonances, heart beats, which are not difficult to hear. (p.22)

Here, performance partially lives on in its remains instead of disappearing altogether. This idea suggests that performance documents can continue to perform long after the performance ceases.

This is perhaps attractive because it opens up the theoretical debate to allow for more artistically engaged responses to performance documentation.

Jessica Santone is another art historian who is particularly interested in the attempts that artists have made to open up new ways of understanding and approaching the historicization of live events through a different kind of engagement with performance documentation. In *Marina Abramović's Seven Easy Piece's*¹⁵: *Critical Documentation Strategies for Preserving Art's History* (2008) she poses that works such as Abramović's present themselves *as* documents which 'seek to contribute to the narrativised and/or mediated understandings of the past that already come after the originary moment' (2008: p.147). This idea is not predicated on a *return* to an original moment but rather the extension of the event by generating new documentations exploring it in the present. Santone hopes that new ideas on documentation might emerge out of the growing friction between artists that are becoming increasingly interested in the creative potential of documentation and new approaches that may develop out of artistic practice that can challenge methods developed over the years in archives.

Rebecca Schneider discusses the idea that historical repetition of performance produces a different way of knowing history than traditionally understood from archives. Santone argues that there is no reasonable way of assessing *what* an accurate or authentic past *is*, and that archives are often – in one way or another – striving (and failing) to return to a notion of the past as a completed object.¹⁶ Abramović does not adhere to the idea of a historical event as a finished or completed

¹⁵ Marina Abramović's *Seven Easy Pieces* was presented at the Guggenheim Museum in November 2005. For *Seven Easy Pieces* Marina Abramović re-enacted five seminal performance works by her peers, dating from the 1960s and 70s, and two of her own. The project confronted the fact that little documentation exists from this critical early period and one often has to rely upon testimony from witnesses or photographs. Abramović's re-enactments attempted to provide a different kind of account of the work than was available in the archived documentation.

¹⁶ Archive theorists such as Terry Cook (2000), as well as F.X. Blouin Jr and W.G. Rosenberg (2007), have suggested that 'the capacity of documents to serve as evidence is not inherent within them and that the archivist generates meaning through a process of selection' (Roms, 2008). Archivists have turned away in recent years from the idea that they have to present and perpetuate the idea that contained within the material artefacts and documentation lies a real and accessible part of the *authentic* past. The notion that documents might form a fixed view of a performance which may become a single authoritative account by

thing. Rather, she aims to produce new materials that 'repeats and multiplies an historical idea, inflecting its image through a nostalgic lens' (2008: p.147). Santone contends that Marina Abramović's re-enactments work on a model of 'messy and eruptive reappearance' (2002: p.103) that repetition of fragments offer disordered but fruitful reappearances of the original events. She states that 'Re-performance proposes a dynamic, living document as a solution to the past's disappearance; it allows a re-experiencing of the work in a time-based, body-based, ephemeral medium and makes available new experiences of memory' (2008: p.151). Santone explores the notion that artistic investigations of performance documents can *make the past present* by generating new experiences which document some aspects of a different past experience.

The seemingly limitless and divergent approaches to the idea of disappearance both theoretically and practically can be disorienting. The stimulating factor in this debate is summarised by Jones, Abbott and Ross when they state that 'The temporal nature of performance causes tension: the fear of loss leads to an urgent desire to counter this through documenting, while the loss inherent in this process leaves many dissatisfied with the outcome' (2009: p.3). The sense of dissatisfaction comes from the feeling that these documents can never fully represent what these scholars call the 'essential properties' (ibid) of performance. Reason states 'there can be no concept of documentation without a sense of that which is not (or cannot be) documented' (Reason: p.27). Further to this, 'the discourse of documentation continually re-inscribes perceptions of ephemerality; the act of documentation marks and brings into being the fact of disappearance' (ibid).

Notions of ephemerality and the politics of liveness and disappearance have a significant impact on the ways that we view and approach documentation. It can be argued that the debates most fiercely fought in this field are the theoretical ones. Discussions on ephemerality and disappearance will underpin this research. In relation to my own working process, I am far more

virtue of being archived is strongly opposed by performance scholars, like Auslander and Reason, just as it is by postmodern archival thinkers, such as Cook and Harris (See Abbott, Jones and Ross, 2009: p.3).

attracted by the possibility that the ephemeral lives on in the body of those involved in creating the performance and its audience as well as the corporal material that remains. When we encounter documents we generate new ephemeral events which explore the past in the present, as such: 'performances are constantly in a state of becoming and have no definable end' (Abbott, Jones and Ross, 2009: p.5). This playful view of performance and documentation does not delimit or detract from the particular qualities of transience and liveness which are so important to the art-form but at the same time it does acknowledge the multiple possibilities for these ephemeral events to remain and interact with new audiences in a variety of different ways. I advocate the position that documentation and our engagement with it is a continuation of the original event. The process of live performance is one whereby the work is always in flux, where it is always written over, added to, forgotten, extended, transformed, re-contextualised, and reinvented through a continual engagement with its documentation. In other words, it is important to view performance from a historical perspective, to understand how it worked in the context for which it was made, to understand how it was perceived and affected the world around it in its first form and original conception. However, understanding the potential of documentation to provide a continual engagement with the event in the present enables scholars to think differently about how they historicise performance. This idea comes into focus in chapter, four of this thesis when I explore the work of Wrights & Sites and their *A Mis-guide to Anywhere*. As a form, the *Mis-guides* invite the participants to reflect on their regular habitual uses of the dwelt in places encountered in a person's daily life experience. By asking the reader to become performer and discover new or re-discover old aspects of their lived in environment, the *Mis-guides* enable new performative encounters with landscape. This study discusses how the discrete performances we share with friends – such as the telling of anecdotes or re-enacting actions we once did as teenagers – constitute a form of documentation that makes memories from the past present in their re-performance.

THE ARCHIVE AND REPERTOIRE

Debates about the ways we might curate and disseminate performance documentation have also found prominence in the field. Key discussions surrounding the concepts of *archive* and *repertoire* explore the particular modes of documentation and the ways in which they collect and disseminate information. In *Performance Remains* Rebecca Schneider explores the '...positioning of performance in archival culture' (2001: p.100) and problematises notions like disappearance in relation to the collection and presentation of performance documents. Schneider challenges the view that '...performance cannot reside in its material traces, and therefore it "disappears" ' (2001: p.101). Instead she posits that if we understand performance as disappearing as it happens and that the ephemeral quality of performance is unable to reside in its remains, then we perhaps exclude, 'other ways of knowing, other modes of remembering' (p.101). Both Rebecca Schneider and Diana Taylor, another influential academic in the field, make distinctions between particular modes of historical transmission (that is, the ways in which we generate and pass on a record of history). The archive, as a mode, deals explicitly with corporeal materials, with 'texts, documents, buildings and bones' (Taylor, 2003: p.19). This is opposed to what Taylor terms the repertoire, which is more concerned with an embodied, performative manner of disseminating historical information, for example: 'spoken language, dance, sports, ritual' (ibid). Repertory based methods of documentation seem to challenge established views of what exactly constitutes 'valid' methods of performance historiography.

Both the repertory and the archival impulse to work with performance documentation derive from the same aim of contextualising the past. The archive is predicated on the idea that events of the past can be accessed through remains which are left behind. Interacting with archival documents allows an endless stream of potential new audiences to engage with past works by providing contextual and descriptive information of the original performance events. Rebecca Schneider seeks to disrupt established positions of the archive by suggesting that performance is not

that which disappears but is both an act of remaining and means of reappearance and re-participation. We are 'almost immediately forced to admit that remains do not have to be isolated to the document, to the object, to bone verses flesh. Here the body becomes a kind of archive and host a collective memory' (2002: p.101). In this sense, '...performance becomes itself through messy and eruptive reappearance. It challenges, via the performative trace, any need antimony between appearance and disappearance, or presence and absence through the basic repetitions that mark performance as indiscreet, not original, relentlessly citation, and remaining' (Schneider 2011: p.102). Schneider advocates the position that ephemerality resides in the body; it does not die or disappear once an event concludes. Certain kinds of knowledge reside in the body and are transmitted in performance. In this sense, performance always remains, ephemerality transcends time through living bodies, and memories reside in the body and remain there. While the 20th century brought with it new and broader ideas of documentation in the archive, things that were previously overlooked or dismissed, such as: recorded speech, image, gesture, the establishment of 'oral archives' are now readily accepted modes of historiography.

According to Taylor, the repertoire aims to produce a different 'kind' of knowledge. The primary supposition is that Western epistemologies (the ways that we understand what knowledge is and how it is shared) have historically focused on writing, as opposed to embodied – performative – modes of transmitting knowledge. She states that: 'writing has paradoxically come to stand in for and against embodiment' (2003: p.16). Taylor indicates that the 'digital revolution both utilises and threatens to displace writing' (ibid). The internet provides worldwide access to platforms that allow users to communicate their version of events in many different ways. As such, there are limitless opportunities to write material, publish it and share it. This open access has implications, the first is that writing does not hold the same authoritative power it once had: words do not have to be vetted or deemed worthy by an editor or expert before they are disseminated. The prevalence of platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and Wordpress show the importance of writing as a primary form of expression. That said, as Taylor also indicates, new technologies also provide opportunities for

people to communicate their version of events in many different ways. There are now other platforms that are becoming increasingly popular and they promote visual modes of communication rather than literary. Instagram and Pinterest offer space for users to share pictures, Vimeo and Youtube are available for users to share videos. Smart phones have video recorders as standard and fast internet allows for the streaming of video in real time. So, writing is being matched or, in some cases, replaced entirely.

Taylor understands that approaching performance as a *system* of learning, storing, and transmitting knowledge, performance studies can allow for an expanded understanding of what may constitute knowledge. Repertory modes have challenged established views of what exactly constitutes documentation; here the idea of the body becoming a (temporary) document comes to the fore. These methods work against what Taylor identifies as the 'preponderance of writing in western epistemologies' (2003: p.16). Both the archive and the repertoire view the documentation of live events differently. The archive's sense of documentation is predicated on materiality¹⁷ whereas the repertoire considers the body as a viable document or archive which can disseminate a different sense of the past. Taylor states: 'the repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by "being there," being a part of the transmission' (2003: p.20). The difference is between objects and actions, which are treated as differently as modes of knowledge transmission. Objects are perceived as stable because of their materiality and seemingly unchanging physical presence as opposed to flexible and changing actions of dance, ritual, singing, gestures, orality, movement and other performance.

Taylor is careful to avoid re-solidifying the archive and the repertoire as binary opposites in her writing. Instead she states that they considered as two important sources of information which work in tandem, and each exceeds the limitations of the other. Taylor writes that we should not 'polarise the relationship between these different kinds of knowledge to acknowledge that they

¹⁷ In this sense materiality is used to describe objects, artefacts and other material remains.

have often proved antagonistic in the struggle for cultural survival or supremacy' (Taylor, 2003: p.22). Schneider contends that it is Taylor's own argument and terminology of the 'archival constituting hegemonic power and the repertoire providing the anti-hegemonic challenge' (ibid) that unintentionally reinforces the same binary opposition she is advocating to break down. Schneider highlights that 'the parsing of discourse as belonging to the archive on the one hand and non-discourse as the realm of performance on the other replicates the very gnarled bind Taylor's book *simultaneously* works, so very productively, to trouble' (Schneider, 2011: p.107).

Taylor asks whether it is better to expand the notion of the archive to house the mnemonic and gestural practices and specialised knowledge transmitted live or to reject the confinement of the archive altogether. Taylor insists that there is an advantage to thinking about the repertoire performed through dance, theatre, song, ritual, witnessing, healing practices, memory patterns, and many other forms of repeatable behaviours as something that cannot be housed or contained in the archive. Schneider, on the other hand, argues that the archive is *also* part of an embodied repertoire, that texts require bodies to engage with them to transmit their knowledge. She states that: 'Dwelling in the dust, texts themselves necessarily meet bodies and engage in the repetition and revision [...] Thus texts, too, take place in the deferred *live* space of their encounter...' (Schneider, 2011: 106). Schneider argues that where Taylor 'works to situate the repertoire as *another kind of archive*' there is also 'the twin effort situating the archive as *another kind of performance*' (Schneider, 2011: p.108). Nevertheless, both Schneider and Taylor open up a useful discourse on the various modes of documentation and the different ways they can be disseminated. I draw on these discussions in Chapter Four when I explore the work of *Wrights & Sites* and add to them by exploring how the group's *Mis-guides* provoke varying types of interaction with landscape. I explore, amongst other things, how the *Mis-guides* can help to facilitate a process whereby participants re-perform actions which they associate with strong memories of being in certain places. I discuss how the discrete performances we share with friends – such as the telling of anecdotes or performing actions we once did regularly – help keep the past 'alive'.

Arguably the key to preservation is reuse. Records could be said to perform when they're used and there is a possibility for them to be reinvented as new performance events

(Jones, Abbott, Ross, 2009: p.6).

There are already a great number of academics exploring the potentials of performance documentation and testing a variety of ways these documents might be disseminated in a wider academic or public sphere. Attempts to reimagine the archive and the acknowledgement of the potential for performance to remain through its documentation have sparked a variety of practical investigations in performance studies. Academics such as Jones, Abbott and Ross have called for a more experimental approach to performance documentation and preservation, stating that: 'we should explore models that encourage records to evolve and be contested as performance itself constantly develops and is reinterpreted' (Jones, Abbott, Ross, 2009: p.5). These academics – and others like them – are interested in the idea that performance lives on of its own accord in material traces that are waiting to be enacted or animated through each new engagement. They go on to state that 'We should encourage dialogue and allow records to be re-performed and re-contextualised so their relevance and meaning maps across the changes of time' (Jones, Abbott, Ross, 2009: p.7). These ideas were reflected by the Performing the Archive fellowship at Bristol University, where Paul Clarke proposed possible models that attempt to work in this vein. He advises that 'performance archives [should] be reflective, open to multiplicity and accepting of content that is ephemeral and indiscrete' (in Jones, Abbott, Ross, 2009: p.7).

In Johanna Linsley's paper 'Remake and Redux: Performing the Document', she refigured philosopher Giorgio Agamben's work in an attempt to shift debates on performance archives away from arguments of 'lying/truth' towards 'potential or non-potential' of performance documentation. Agamben's work 'explores the theme of potentiality and a curiosity into the role potentiality plays in all aspects of our existence' (Balskus, 2010: p.156). Linsley's paper meditated on the notion of re-contextualisation similar to that which I have already discussed in relation to Heddon, Pearson and Shanks, but she directly related a philosophical stance on 'potentiality' to written textual documents.

In explaining the theory of potentiality Linsley follows Agamben's example of Herman Melville's *Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall-Street*. The story draws on the 'Dead Letter Office' within the United States Postal Service, which was set up in 1825 to deal with undeliverable mail. Agamben thought of the protagonist Bartleby as the prime example of potentiality. Melville's tale details the life of Bartleby, a scrivener¹⁸ who decides to stop writing without any expressed reason other than the repeated refrain: 'I prefer not to'. While Bartleby's decision to stop writing (as well as many other tasks fundamental to everyday living) eventually leads to his imprisonment and death, Agamben points to Bartleby as a hopeful figure of pure potentiality, who 'exceeds will (his own and that of Melville's "dead letters" and Barnaby's letters that never reached senders... others) at every point' and is truly able 'neither to posit nor to negate' (Agamben, 1999: pp.255 – 257). By becoming a scrivener who does not write, Bartleby preserves his potentiality in its purest form. Linsley wants to refigure debates about documentation to discuss the potentiality of documentation either to perform or not perform. She invites the idea that documents are only pure potentiality until they are actualised by a participant; they require investment by a participant in order for them to live. It was argued that there are different dimensions of potentiality for documents and documentation, for example a performance score offers a lot of potential to those who engage with it, it presents opportunities to embody the score, it can be taken to and embodied in different locations, they may offer the potential to generate new kinds of engagement between performer and places they perform, new landscapes can be explored through the interplay between score, performer and environment; however a video does not offer a lot of potential because it limits its audience's interaction to viewer only.

Artist and academic Sophia Lycouris seems to explore similar ideas as she views representation through documentation as a 'manifestation of registered concerns' rather than an attempt to reconstruct the original (Lycouris, 2002). She hopes to capture the essence of her

¹⁸ In the past, a scrivener was somebody whose job involved writing or making handwritten copies of documents, books, or other texts.

performances in her documentation rather than attempting to make them reflect a singular reality. Lycouris suggests that we should 'formulate records along the lines of a music score, that when interpreted will re-inspire that experience in the user' (Jones, Abbott, Ross, 2009: p.3). The performative understanding of documents has a lineage traceable to the Fluxus movement of the mid-1960s. The Fluxus movement, inspired by the earlier Dadaists, developed the idea of 'anti-art', under the leadership of George Maciunas. Fluxus staged a series of festivals in Paris, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, London, New York, and Aberystwyth (among others). Most of the experimental artists of the period, including Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono and Nam June Paik, took part in Fluxus events. Fluxus artists would generate 'event scores' which were documents that would incite action. Event scores, such as George Brecht's Drip Music, are essentially performance art scripts that are usually only a few lines long and consist of descriptions of actions to be performed rather than dialogue. Fluxus artists differentiate event scores from happenings. Whereas happenings were sometimes complicated, lengthy performances meant to blur the lines between performer and audience, performance and reality, Fluxus works were usually brief and simple. Some Fluxus documents¹⁹ had the potential to initiate performance by invitation or instruction, with some 'events' becoming actualised upon enactment reading. As well as or as an alternative to being physically performed, other Fluxus scores were actualised through reading and imagining, some scores such as Dick Higgins 1961 *Danger Music Number One* were deliberately 'impossible' to enact; Higgins score told the reader to 'spontaneously catch hold of a hoist hook and be raised up at least three stories' (Friedman, Smith and Sawchyn 2002: p.50). I investigate this kind of interaction between document and participant later in this thesis and highlight how particular documentary strategies can be understood as a form of notion or scoring, particularly in Chapter Three when I discuss Simon Whitehead's drawings and in Chapter Four when I discuss *Wrights & Sites Mis-guides*.

¹⁹ A collection of Fluxus scores from artist's such as George Brecht, Albert M. Fine, Ken Friedman, Milan Knizak, Alison Knowles, Nam June Paik, and Mieko Shiomi, et al, can be found in Friedman, Smith and Sawchyn's (2002) *The Fluxus Performance Workbook*.

The wide variety of theoretical debates about the role of documentation has been a catalyst for more practical explorations within the field. As has been discussed thus far, there are many different ideas about how we should understand documentation and what its functions might be in a practical sense. These debates have enabled some to shift their research focus to consider what the role of the person documenting might be or a more thorough exploration of the process of documenting performance as a practice. In 'Performance Documentation/Performing Documents/Documenting Performance: what's the difference?' (2013), Tony Sant explored – amongst other things – these specific questions in more detail. First though, he wanted to consider the some of the active terms which have come into regular usage almost in an organic and, Sant would argue, unconsidered way. He states thus:

Performance documentation is a passive phrase; it signifies an inactive material, objects and documents, perhaps that remain in and of themselves.

Documenting performance is an active phrase; it signifies the act of doing, of making or curating documentation.

Performing documents is interactive; it signifies the coming together of documents and bodies. This relationship may be trans-active; a something coming and something going, a sharing between body and document.

(Sant, 2013)

Sant's paper invites us to consider the linguistic significance and difference of these terms but it also opens up a wider discussion about the active role of the person documenting performance. Is this a purely functional role? Could there be more creative implications for the documenter? What might the role of the creative documenter include? What make the roles and responsibilities of such a position take on? How might the documenter's agency affect the work? There are multiple roles within the theatre practice: director, writer, actor, stage designer, stage manager, technician (to name a few). However, given many arguments and discussions surrounding performance documentation, it is not surprising that the role of the person who documents

theatrical performance is not clearly delineated. Perhaps now more than ever, there is a turn towards documentation. Documentation has taken on new cultural significance, especially in the last ten to fifteen years as new technologies and social media platforms transform the way we record, store and transmit information. It is an expansive phenomenon which shows no signs of reduction or limitation, evidenced by figures released by Facebook that show how the platform has consistently grown year on year, and now has over 2.23 billion monthly users (Facebook, 2018). Advancements in new technology have made it an affordable possibility for the vast majority of the public to have phones with cameras built into them. The role that documentation plays in our daily lives has become more pronounced as it is with ease that we share and disseminate our personal information and content through websites like Flickr and Facebook (amongst many other social media). It is perhaps this new cultural turn which makes Gay McAuley proposition that 'While individuals may feel anguish at the lack of more durable traces of these experiences, most theatre artists are more interested in their next show than documenting the one that has just closed' (1994: p.184) less understandable today. As McAuley also states 'there was no overriding desire to document performance before mechanical forms of recording became familiar, not least because such documentation would have been impossible' (1986 p.5). The very fact that we have the technologies to document and that they are accessible to almost everyone is an overriding reason as to why documentation has become so important as Reason compounds when he states 'it seems fairly certain that the existence of increasingly sophisticated methods of recording intensified both urge and expectation for documentation' (Reason, 2006: p.26).

Documentation, in both its implicit theoretical complications and practical concerns, is always bound up in questions of what the nature of the live performance event is. Notions like *transience*, *liveness* and *disappearance* have been used in multiple ways to open up the debate about what differentiates live performance as an art form. The positive enforcement of the idea that performance is uncapturable as a result of its inherent ephemerality has been a consistent motif that problematises the field of documentation as well as challenging and extending understandings

around modes of dissemination. Exactly what constitutes a document has been challenged over the last fifteen years, moving away from the idea that documents are only physical materials or inanimate objects towards a wider understanding which incorporates the idea of the body as a document. Performance archives have proved to be fruitful breeding grounds for new experiments with documents and modes of presentation.

This review demonstrates that from the philosophical debates on liveness and disappearance, a more practical question of what actually constitutes documentation is produced. Whilst those interested in the former primarily concern themselves with investigating and theorising the ontology of performance and discussing the implications of performances relationship to the documents it produces; this thesis focuses more on the varied documentary strategies of my three case studies. Each case study adds to the discussion by using landscape as a lens for drawing attention to nuances of the work and the different approaches taken by the artist's to account for those nuances in their performance documentation. Landscape becomes a useful framework for analysing the documents themselves as it exposes certain limitations of the forms used (the fixity of certain documents like photographs, recordings, reports, and their inability to account for the complex multiplicity of the experiences afforded by landscape performance). The landscape concept also opens up new potentials for documentation as objects or tracks discovered on the land are reframed as documents that evidence past acts of landscaping, or how a repertoire of commonly performed activities operate as triggers for memories and past experiences connected to the landscape.

Discussions of the archive and repertoire, of re-enactments and other embodied forms of documenting performance, acknowledge a wider spectrum of ideas about what documents can be and can do. These discussions are taken forward into each of the case studies in the particular documents selected for discussion. In the second chapter I discuss how NVA's documentary strategy culminates in new performance events in which documentary films are presented. In the third

chapter I explain how Simon Whitehead produces soundscapes that document the artist's body in landscape, and how these can be downloaded and experienced by new audiences. In the fourth chapter I show how the *Mis-guides* invite the creation of new *Mis-guides* based on the experiences of the participants. By moving between photography, blogs, sound recordings, drawings, and *Mis-guide* exercises, this thesis examines a broad spectrum of materials and practices that can be considered performance documentation and considers their potential and limits through the lens of landscape. It adds to the current debate by showing that the ways in which the performance makers produce documentation establishes different audiences for the work and engages them in many different ways; ultimately, it makes a case for recognising documentation as a creative practice in its own right.

LANDSCAPE PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION

Finally, this section concludes with a consideration of the connections between existing debates on documentation and the previous discussion about landscape performance. It investigates the ways that phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape relate to existing discourses on documentation.

All present experience contains ineradicable traces of the past
which remain part of the constitution of the present.

(Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2007: p.158)

In the study of the history and the material traces of the past, both performance and landscape studies have borrowed from other disciplines such as forensic science, history and archaeology. In *Theatre/Archaeology* Pearson and Shanks highlight that the role of the theatre historian is very similar to an archaeologist, dealing with the material remains of the past in an attempt to 're-contextualise' events for an audience to encounter in a mediated form. *Theatre/Archaeology* is itself collection of documents; a composition of a fusion of anecdotes, photographs, stories, critical analysis, reflection, definitions, suggestions and ideas all intertwined in a dialogue between its two authors. They discuss the term *assemblage* and how it binds their two disciplines together as both make use of the term in similar ways to signify the creation of meaning by working with fragments. Archaeology forges a 'sense' of the past through an assemblage of images, diagrams, collections, and writings. Performance, and in particular devised work, can be seen as a kind of assemblage that:

'results from the identification selection and accumulation of
concepts, actions, texts, places and things which are composed
and orchestrated in space and time'

(2001: p.55).

Landscape performance, of all kinds, leaves traces on the land, documenting the things that have happened there. A phenomenological understanding of the landscape places significant

emphasis on the influence of the historical past on our experience in the present, that 'the environment is itself pregnant with past - as we walk it, we not only remember our own past - that is after all how we get around - but also enact the activities of those who have gone before; 'places do not have locations but histories' (Ingold, p.219). The landscape is bound to memory; individuals visit and revisit the same places. For many, our lives are encapsulated by the routes and routines that make up our daily activity. Our repeated movements become 'biographical encounters as the endlessly recall previous events and see traces of past activities' (Pearson, 2010: p.95). These movements can be captured in 'desire lines' which is a term used to 'denote paths which are created by humans or animals which diverges from concrete or paved roads' (Ramsden, 2014: p.22).



(Figure 1. A desire line through trees, Barnet, Kake Pugh, 2007)

These informal paths produced by pedestrians show the shortest or most easily navigated route between an origin and destination; the trails evidence the continual repetition of foot-fall of those who circumvented the official route to take the shorter distance. These desire lines relate to performance and dance scores in that the line is instructive for movement – inviting others to follow

– just as dance scores document choreography for others to rehearse and repeat. But, further than this, Ingold notes how ‘this embodiment is not inscription but rather incorporation’ (2000: p.204), landscape is not some pre-existing form which we arrive at and effect through our activity, rather ‘both being and environment are mutually emergent; continuously brought into being together’ (ibid). Desire lines are not merely another brushstroke upon a canvas, the landscape is not fixed like scenery and we perform on top of it. Rather, landscape emerges in the interrelation between beings and the places they inhabit: ‘if we recognise man’s gait in the pattern of his footprints it is not because the gait preceded the footprint and was inscribed in them, but because both the gait and the prints arose within the movement of the man’s walking’ (ibid). The actions of our everyday lives mark our material surroundings and such marks are authentic traces of our lived experience.

Ingold states that the traces left on the land may be either be additive or reductive:

A line drawn with charcoal paper, one with chalk on a blackboard, is additive, since the material from the chalk forms an extra layer that is superimposed on the substrate. Lines that are scratched, scored or etched into a surface reductive, since they are formed by the removal of material from the surface itself.

(Ingold, 2007, p. 43)

From the overt additive markings of graffiti artists who ‘tag’ their territory’s with signature designs, their actions inscribing their own personal influence on the surfaces, to the more subtle markings of those who scuffed their rubber soles on the subway tiles; the reductive markings left by those who have inadvertently stood in mud and carried some with them on their shoes, or perhaps those who chipped paint off of a railing, or worn down the stone steps over years of repeatedly climbing and descending them. We inscribe ourselves on our surroundings in many different ways, each mark or trace documents the action that has taken place there. A discussion of these markings and their relationship to landscape – whilst found and observed – still relates more to the phenomenologically-inspired conceptions than the Cartesian; additive and reductive markings zoom in on the detail and, by their nature, never presume to present the landscape as an observable

whole. These markings always relate to a movement/action/experience that happened prior to its creation, they evoke experience rather than the picturesque or geometric.

This research project will work in mind of these debates and concepts and will often draw on current theoretical stances towards performance, documentation and landscape as the thesis develops. I add to these discussions through an assessment of the multiplicity of certain performance documents, attempting to give detailed analysis of the numerous roles and functions that particular documents create. As a focus for this research I will look to explore performances that forge complex relationships with the landscape. Just as it is clear that phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape share a vocabulary and interest with performance, the same is true for documentation. This triad of interests is the foundation for this thesis as it gets tangled in questions about the particular liveness of landscape performance and the implications involved in trying to find and discuss the traces that they leave behind.

Key Questions:

What strategies have been used to document NVA's landscape performance work?

What ideas of landscape might be produced through the documentation of landscape performance works?

Can performance through its documentation help to articulate or extend our understanding of landscape?

CHAPTER 2

NVA's *Speed of Light* Documentation

NVA is a Scottish arts organisation founded in 1992 by their longstanding artistic director Angus Farquhar. The acronym which forms the group's name stands for 'nacionale vitae activa', a Latin term meaning 'the right to influence public affairs'. The organisation is best known for creating large scale performance works in a variety of outdoor locations. In recent works they have used light and sound to draw attention to aspects of the landscape, and they invite audiences to experience or interact with the land through walking, running or observing it. NVA's vision is to 'make powerful public art, which articulates the complex qualities of a location through collective action. The work... sees each audience member as an individual who, through direct experience, is enriched and inspired' (Farquhar, 2011: p.115). NVA's works regularly invite audiences to perform a series of particular actions in a selected location, wading up a river or climbing a mountain, for example;²⁰ the performance work itself emerges from the direct participation in the landscape. The organisation aims to allow those involved in the work – participating performers and audience members – to 're-imagine or redefine urban or rural space' whilst exploring 'how cities and populations are defined by each other' (Farquhar, 2013: p.21). Since its inception, the Glasgow-based organisation has endeavoured to create performance works which explore the ways that humans experience and interact with landscapes.

²⁰ Particular examples include *The Secret Sign* (1998) at Finnich Glen, Drymen wherein the audience, wearing hard hats and wading boots, were guided through dark waters exploring a site that was animated by light, sound, projection, fire and specifically created effects. *Half Life* (2007) at Kilmartin Glen, Argyll is another example where NVA guided audiences around a number of prehistoric landmarks.

During its formative years NVA experimented with different modalities of performance. Works like *The Silent Twins* (1994) and *Pain* (1996) were story-based dramas, presented to an audience of immobile spectators in what might be considered a more conventional end-on stage setting. Alongside these narrative-based pieces however, NVA also sought to create more experimental work which gave particular emphasis to the ways that light and sound could be used to draw attention to and animate specific aspects of the landscape. Beginning in 1998 with *The Secret Sign* and then following on with works like *The Path* in 2000 and *the Storr: Unfolding Landscape* in 2005, NVA really emphasised their commitment to exploring relationships between performance and landscape. Their desire to examine ‘the ways in which human beings, wherever they are, make sense of the land on which they depend and build profound relationships’ (Reid, 2005: p.16) is consistent in all of their work. Seona Reid, in her background chapter for the organisations publication on *Storr*, insists that ‘the work is always built on respect – respect for the landscape in which it locates, respect for the cultures it seeks to interpret and respect for those who witness it’ (2005: p.16). This study will analyse NVA’s documentary methods and materials and the ways they have been mediated and presented.

In the previous chapter that framed the thesis, I outlined some competing understandings of landscape and explained how they related to my conception of landscape performance. The main concern raised in the first section of the framing chapter was that the phenomenological conceptions of landscape would be less compatible with the materials that were produced to document the work. I follow this line of enquiry in this chapter through a focused investigation of NVA’s documentary strategies and materials, as I analyse both the potential and limits of reading the performance documentation through these competing definitions of landscape. I use concepts and methods from cultural geography and anthropology to consider the ways in which certain performance documents align with or disrupt particular conceptions of landscape. This chapter focuses on the *Speed of Light* suite of works which span 2012 to 2014, particularly because it articulates the conception of landscape performance highlighted in the introduction to this thesis.

NVA's works consistently emerge from (or are reliant on) a direct participation in the landscape. Their work is particularly pertinent to this thesis as much for their documentary practices (that is the way they document their work) as for the works themselves. The framing chapter also drew attention to how debates on performance ontology led to a greater focus on performance's relationship to its documentation. Understandings of what constitutes performance documentation have evolved in recent years in light of new experiments, both with the technology for producing and sharing documentation becoming widely available and a popular site of exploration for performance makers. There are a number of academics who have investigated the form and function of documentation in light of an ever evolving development with technology. Jess Allan's paper, 'Depth-charge in the archive: the documentation of performance revisited in the digital age' (2010) for example, explored how the advent of digital technology in live performance has complexified the traditional perceptions of archives by altering the architecture, space and dimensionality of the live event. The work of Elena Pérez also explored how performance practitioners, through their utilisation of emergent digital platforms, 'can foster the transformation of the participant into documenter as part of the cultural event through game design strategies' (Pérez, 2014: p.77). This chapter adds to these discussions through a close analysis of NVA's varied and complex documentary strategies, highlighting the broad methods that Angus Farquhar uses to represent his company's work (including light-trail photography). This study gives a greater understanding of how NVA produce documents that create space for new audiences. NVA employ a variety of strategies to document their performances and their creative processes. This study will focus on *Speed of Light's* accumulated documentation and provide an analysis of the potential and limits of their documents to represent landscape performance, especially in mind of the complexities involved in phenomenologically-inspired, fundamentally unstable, conceptions of landscape adopted to frame the work. Throughout this report I will investigate what methods NVA employed to document *Speed of Light*. I will explore how NVA employ different documentary methods to account for different elements of their work but I will also investigate what the implications of these

strategies are, what their accumulated documentation can and cannot convey of the complexity of the landscape performance experience, and why.

Speed of Light began as one of four national projects, commissioned as part of the Legacy Trust's Community Celebrations programme, which aimed to build a lasting legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. NVA's work provided Edinburgh's contribution to what became known as the Cultural Olympiad, a celebration of key ideas connected to the Olympics such as: team work, dedication, and athleticism. The original manifestation of *Speed of Light* was located on Arthur's Seat, an extinct volcano that looms over the Scottish capital. The work sought the involvement of runners from all backgrounds. The performance invited its audience to climb Arthur's Seat at night in groups of around twenty. Each participant was given a walking stick which was integrated with LED lights to illuminate their path. The audience had the opportunity to watch a performance unfold on a different part of the mountain as over a hundred runners, wearing outfits which also incorporated full colour LED lights, ran in patterns on the side of the mountain. The suits were controlled remotely by a wireless DMX system that allowed the company to have individual lighting control over each of the suits' colour and intensity.

Although the work began in Edinburgh, *Speed of Light* is perhaps better described as a series of events which stem from a central concept, a concept which has proved adaptable as it has been recreated for different destinations and has continually shifted in scope and scale. The concept is simple; participating performers wear specially designed LED light suits and move in choreographed patterns at a predetermined outdoor location. After Edinburgh, Farquhar took *Speed of Light* to Salford in England, Yokohama in Japan, across the Ruhr in Germany, and most recently to Leeds. In its most recent permutation the concept was adapted to cyclists and LED lights affixed to bikes. Each time the performance moved to a different location NVA would strike up new partnerships within the local community and work with new choreographers and participants to plan and perform an altered manifestation of the work. Community remains an important theme in the company's work

and forms the basis of their working practice in many of the projects they do. It is through collaboration, facilitation and participation that projects on the scale of *Speed of Light* can be achieved. In NVA's publication *To Have and to Hold: The Future of a Contested Landscape* (2011) Farquhar lays out his approach to creating work in collaboration with local communities:

A community is not one thing and one opinion, it's an endless diversity, and there are tensions and arguments within the communities and disagreements. That's democratic life. So rather than attempting to homogenise and make everyone into a perfect community, you're realising the potential for people to feel comfortable or uncomfortable within this. For us, it's very important then to respect this plurality of visions.

(2011: p.87)

The fundamental impulse to accommodate (if not entirely account for) the multitude of experiences and sensibilities of their participants remains a central concern for the company, and it links with a clear aim to present their work and the landscape in ways that are manifold in message. Farquhar hopes that his work avoids projecting any premeditated message onto the locations they perform in. He prefers to think that those participating in the work (audience members or performers) will gain their own interpretations and relationships to the landscape through the work as it unfolds. Whilst the central concept remains the same in all the *Speed of Light* events, every version is conditioned by the particularities of each new location and the people the organisation choose to collaborate with. The version of the work based in Yokohama is different to the version based in the Ruhr, the former is performed within a built up urban area and therefore offers a different kind of experience to the latter, which is performed in a spacious landscape park. I do not want to overstate the differences in each of the works so much as I want to highlight that the concept succeeds in adapting to new locations, attracting different participants and reaching new audiences.

THE EVOLUTION OF NVA'S DOCUMENTARY STRATEGY

Just as the live events adapted and evolved as the work travelled to new locations, so too did NVA's documentary strategy. Evidenced in the accumulation of materials on their website, the variety and volume of documentation grew with each new version of the performance. What this chapter will show as it develops is that documentation moved from being a subsidiary part of the process, which only attempted to account for the live event, to a constituting part of the live event, and finally to being presented as artwork at an event in its own right. The evolution of NVA's documentary processes is worth considering further because it shows how the organisation identified the artistic potential of certain types of documentation and then incorporated certain of them into their live performance events. This evolution is evidenced in simplest terms in volume and scale: for the first version of the work in Edinburgh, NVA employed a set of documentary strategies including: photography, autobiographical accounts, descriptions of the land, and short video clips. The documentation was functional; each aspect contributed a different kind of representation which aimed to build up a sense of the work in Edinburgh.

The documentary methods became more elaborate for the Yokohama instalment of *Speed of Light*; there were more images, more detailed descriptions and reflections, which began to include views of people outside the creative team. The company also collaborated with other artists, inviting objective (as far as that is possible) observers to use one iteration of the live event as material for their own documentary artwork. It is important to incorporate the word artwork here to denote the ways that the light from moving participants was manipulated to produce new abstract shapes and patterns which were fundamentally aesthetic as opposed to documentary. Video material for the Yokohama iteration, for example, was captured by Tokyo based director Ayumi Sakamoto utilising a range of camera angles, filters and techniques to produce her film. This represented a shift in scope for the video documentation from a simple end product to something far more complex. Videos produced from previous iterations were limited in their scope made

through the recording of the entire work from a few fixed angles and then formed via a selection and merging of moments into the one linear video. Axel Biermann, the Executive Director for Ruhr Tourismus, explains that by the time *Speed of Light* reached Germany the images were considered to be an essential component of the event as one of the key motivations for commissioning the work was to 'generate new and impressive images of Emscher Landscape Park' (2013: p.10). Clearly, Biermann recognised the potential of *Speed of Light's* live event to be used not merely as a performance work to be enjoyed in the moment but also as material that could be used to produce visually stimulating images that could offer new and exciting representations of the Ruhr. Representations of the Ruhr had mainly been comprised of daytime shots – the fact that *Speed of Light* took place at night and in the dark ensured that images offering an entirely different aesthetic quality would be produced, helping to advertise and promote a different kind of landscape experience to potential visitors.

In the latest instalment of the *Speed of Light* series in May, 2014 – renamed *Ghost Peloton* as the work was adapted to celebrate the beginning of the Tour de France in Leeds – video documentation was integrated as part of the live event. The performance took on a different form as the light-suits were worn by volunteer cyclists and LEDs attached to their bike wheels. The audience were situated around a makeshift arena in Waides Yard in Leeds and watched as the cyclists circled round tracks and shifted between multiple formations. As the cyclists sped round their routes, video documentation was projected onto a large screen adjacent to the arena. Up until this point, videos were only recorded, formed into a separate piece which would then be made available for viewing weeks after the live event took place. *Ghost Peloton* demonstrated that the aesthetic attraction of some of NVA's earlier video documentation was strong enough for that element to be incorporated into their live event itself, which NVA did in different ways – a mixture of pre-recorded and live footage. Of course, this necessitated a development in filming techniques as the facility to record and project live footage, and apply certain aesthetic filters to that footage, had to be found and assimilated.

Alongside the live footage, there were two documentary films made, edited together and then projected on a large screen as part of the event. The first film was documentary footage of selected cyclists wearing the light-suits as they travelled through the Tour de France race route in Yorkshire. The second collaboration extended past the theme of cycling and presented choreographed movement pieces by the Phoenix Dance Company, which were shown in slow motion, real time and sped up to create different effects. The amalgamation of live performance and previously unseen video documentation demonstrates how important certain kinds of documentation became for the *Speed of Light* project. The evolution of the documentary strategy impacted on how the work was interpreted in relation to landscape. What began in its first iteration in Edinburgh as a piece designed to animate the land (to use light to show elements of the topography literally in new light) seemed to become less about how light could animate the land and more about the manipulation of light for visual effect, a position emphasised by the fact that half of the filmed footage that was presented at the live event had not been recorded on site at all, opting instead to use an indoor studio space in a different part of the city. I am not making a qualitative judgement here, simply stating the fact that the different documentary strategies employed throughout the development of the *Speed of Light* project influenced the extent to which landscape was represented in the work.

On the 6th of October 2014 NVA presented three short art films at the SWG3 venue in Glasgow. The films were refined versions of the original documentary materials from the work in Japan, Germany and England. Ayumi Sakamoto created the film which used the version performed in Yokohama, Alan McAteer's film used the Ruhr version, and Mark Huskisson created his film using footage both from the *Ghost Peloton* live event and other documentary materials he gained before the event took place in Leeds. The documentary films mark the end of an iterative process: for the first version of the work, the documents were created to account for the event and to help sell the concept (very successfully) to other arts commissioning bodies and producers around the world. In later versions of *Speed of Light* in Manchester, Yokohama and the Ruhr documents were created

both to account for the work and sell the idea but they also showed an increasing awareness of the artistic potential. By the time *Speed of Light* evolves into *Ghost Peloton*, documentation has become a central component of the work, developed before the event and presented live with the cyclists. Finally, in Glasgow, the documentary footage takes on new significance as it is presented to an audience at an event dedicated solely to documentary footage. In other words, the documentation becomes the central focus of a new *Speed of Light* event.

This study will now draw attention to selected documents, explain how they were created, for what purpose and what meanings can be drawn from them. I aim to reveal how NVA used different kinds of documentation to represent different aspects of the work and how certain artistic decisions led to the creation of documents which present complex landscape performance in different ways. The section following this focuses on the ways that NVA's documentation has been organised and presented and attempts to explore how the documentation has been mediated for particular purposes or effects. The research will explain what the complexities of documenting *Speed of Light* were as well as exploring the multiple relationships and functions the documents have. My hypothesis is that works like *Speed of Light* require more elaborate methods of documentation to account for the complexity of the work, and in the attempt to find ways of documenting the scale and specifics of the work, new creative potential is uncovered. Further, I will argue that these new creative potentials can produce a range of documents that articulate certain qualities of landscape performance in a variety of ways.

NVA have consistently relied on Alan McAteer and his images to form the basis of their documentary strategy. Although photography is a fairly common method of documentation, it is perhaps not an ideal method for creating a representation of a landscape performance, given that an image, by its nature, fixes moving and dynamic elements at a particular moment (elements that are crucial to the performance's ontology). As John Wylie states, the phenomenological emphasis 'often lays stress upon some measure of direct, bodily contact with, and experience of, landscape'

(2007: p.139) which seems to be at odds with what Joel Anderson calls the 'stopping power' of photography, its ability to freeze action (2008: p.15). Landscape theatre performances like *Speed of Light* seem to emphasise the impossible task of the photographer to capture the complexity of the work in a single image, a situation I will explore in more detail as this chapter develops. However, McAteer's photography demonstrates a possible approach which addresses at least some of these difficulties through a creative method which may also bring phenomenological understandings of landscape and photographic representation closer together.

It was important to NVA that McAteer could find a way of evoking the performance event which highlighted the particularities of both the performance and locations they were presented at. The organisation gave McAteer a creative brief to produce visual representations that were different to others captured at the same locations. James Corner contends that landscapes are 'the inevitable result of cultural interpretation and the accumulation of representational sediments over time; they are thereby made distinct from "wildernesses" as they are constructed, or layered' (1992: p.144). So, although 'landscapes may be representationally unstable, they may be practised in different ways, and the same materiality may enable very different relations to human subjects (Rose, 2003: p.271). Ideas of what a particular landscape *is* or what it *means* are shaped by the reproduction and consumption of its representations. Similar photographs, paintings and descriptions of landscapes invariably consolidate specific ideas of what that landscape is about; what happens there; why it is significant; and, what it means. They also suggest ideas of landscape as static and as separate from human experience. McAteer's images were to offer a different kind of representation of both the performance and its selected locations.

ARTHUR'S SEAT AND TOURISM



(Figure 2. Edinburgh from Arthur's Seat, Visit Scotland, 2017)

The above is an image of Edinburgh from Arthur's Seat – the first location where *Speed of Light* was produced - which is featured on the Scottish National Tourist Organisation website in the section on Arthur's Seat and Holyrood Park. This representation is typical of authorised/official representation of the site, indicative of the particular way the organisation wants Edinburgh to be viewed; its aim is to propagate the idea that Arthur's Seat is a scenic spectacle – something interesting to look at or a thing to look at other spectacles from. Maria Amoamo and Anna Thompson (2010) argue that tourist boards have increasingly utilised iconic imagery to generate and consolidate a lasting impression of what their locations have to offer:

Promoted images come to be perceived as 'real' images of the destination, potential tourists are directed towards particular interpretations at the expense of others, and thus 'reality' is contested via unequal relations of power. The official image marks the 'site' as a 'sight', becoming a marker for both the place and the experience.

(2010: p.41)

There are recurrent habitual processes of visitation at popular locations like Arthur's Seat; a common set of actions or activities which visitors are expected to engage in dependent on their particular circumstance. A local dog walker, for example, would have a different set of expected actions to perform than a foreign tourist. Each, though, would still be expected to enact an undetermined set of unspoken rules or expectations. There are certain ways of acting that, through repetition, become normalised over time and risk propagating an authoritative perception of the significance of that place through continual repetition. Interestingly, Edinburgh City Council reinforces these norms by displaying permanent signposts for what they prescribe as 'good photographic opportunities' at different points across the capital. There is a sign on North Bridge which looks over the railway lines and the Scottish Parliament (amongst many other buildings) where the viewer's eye-line rests on the peak of Arthur's Seat. This kind of signposting further proliferates an authoritative presentation of the city, prescribing a set of instructions for would-be photographers, tourists or city dwellers: on how to take images from the particular angles from which they want the city to be represented.

The result of such sign-posting is the repetition of the same fixed image that enforces an understanding of what parts of the city are interesting, what viewpoints are worthy of visualising. *Speed of Light* provides an opportunity to think about the ways that theatrical performance, through its documentation, may represent landscape differently than the dominant representations that are currently in circulation. Both the performance and its documentation provide new layers of interaction and meaning and create space for fresh dialogues about each location in which the performance is set. McAteer's images play a significant role in this. The technique used by Alan McAteer invites us to reflect on what is actually visualised and what the images might convey. This has significant implications for how we might rethink both the representation of landscape and performance.

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

Using the land as a subject of photography – or the creation of that broad range of images that might simply be described as the genre, Landscape Photography – has been an interest for photographers since the foundation of photographic technology, and has held its popularity and continues to attract particular attention today. There is a long history attached to photographing the land. In *The History of Photography* Terri Cassidy states that: ‘photography was invented at a time when Western cultures were exploring new lands. It was used as a medium for documenting the grandeur of the natural environment’ (2009). In the nineteenth century, photography was used to document the world through forays into the wilderness and the frontier. Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan, in the introduction to their collection *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination*, write that ‘the advent of photography opened up new worlds to nineteenth century viewers, enabling them to visualise—with unprecedented accuracy and ease—themselves, their families, their immediate surroundings, their wider communities and the world beyond their doorstep’ (2003: p.5). The landscape photograph became an important form of documentation in ordering the unknown and dominating the ‘unclaimed’ wilderness. Representations of landscape can be traced throughout history, influenced both by aesthetics and ideological considerations. Rodney James Giblett and Juha Pentti Tolonen argue that ‘landscape photography is one of the major formats and modes of photography’; they define landscape photography as ‘the creative, photographic inscription of the visual appreciation for the surfaces of the land’ (2012: p.15). As this definition suggests, photography cannot avoid the photographer’s own subjective relationship, as it is out of that relationship that the ‘art’ in this genre emerges. The decisions taken by a photographer about the kinds of surfaces, at what angle, distance and in what light the picture of the land is taken from have major implications for how the audience of the image interprets the land of which the photograph is an index.

The landscape photograph, as a result of its 'truth-to-nature' quality, has come to epitomise the conflicting views of landscape: between seeing landscape as a replica of specific time and place or as an image of an ideological state. In his attempt to redefine landscape in the context of photography, Nathan Lyons draws attention to the discourse surrounding photography, including such loaded expressions as 'documentary' and 'natural'. Lyons gets to the heart of the matter when he points out that culturally, 'we have pictured so many aspects and objects of our environment in the form of photographs (motion pictures and television) that the composite of these representations has assumed the proportions and identity of an actual environment' (Lyons, 1967: p.31). Lyons attempts to distance these photographs from the discussions and debates of photographic history and instead emphasises, 'that we should not overlook how we have been conditioned to look at and understand pictures' (ibid: p.32).

There were a number of technological advances which laid the foundations for landscape photography and shaped the types of land representation available to the early photographer. In 1826-1827, Nicéphore Niépce managed to take what is considered the first permanent photograph from the natural environment using a technique known as heliography.²¹ Karla McManus highlights that in these early stages of development photography was heralded as a great technological advancement because of its ability to be, what was considered by most at the time, the 'ultimate objective recorder'. She further stated that: 'photography was positioned and understood both as a method of truthful documentation and as a technological innovation' (2009: p.5). Although flawed, the idea of the camera's ability to produce 'truthful documentation' is a lasting one and is significant in explaining how the dichotomy between the photograph as an object of artistic interpretation vs scientific document emerged. In both cases though, it was thought that the camera objectifies the

²¹ The process used Bitumen of Judea, a naturally occurring asphalt, as a coating on glass or metal. It hardened in proportion to its exposure to light. When the plate was washed with oil of lavender, only the hardened areas remained. After Niépce died suddenly in 1833 his partner Louis Daguerre continued the development of the technique. He found that if he exposed silver to an iodine vapour before exposing it to light, and then to mercury fumes after the picture was taken it would form a latent image. He then placed the plate in a salt bath which set the image. In January 1839 Daguerre announced his process and labelled it the daguerreotype.

land and in so doing, renders it a visual phenomenon open to interpretation and aesthetic appreciation. Giblett and Tolonen state that in a photograph: 'the land is rendered as a kind of cadaver laid out for the viewing pleasure of the explorer, settler, tourist or virtual traveller [...] It also institutes visual perception as the sole sensory relationship between them. It is a visual experience for the roaming eye/I which/who occasionally stops to take in "the prospect" from a static view point' (2012: p.59). Precisely what the predominant 'prospect' of landscape photography has been is also significant. Even in the early stages of its development, image-capturing technology facilitated a desire of photography to make a serious claim in its status as art and to generate images of the land which emulated the expressive approach typified by painters like John Constable and J.M.W. Turner.

The historical context for landscape photography lies in this first expressive movement which was later named Pictorial Photography, that is: 'a style of photography and imagery based on an application of the principles of fine art, and, in particular, on ideas of beauty and nature deriving from the Picturesque' (Gilmore, 2009). Documentary photography – or the photographs deliberately produced for the purposes of showing particular views of the land for architectural or planning purposes, for example – coexisted alongside this work as a parallel practice. Pictorial photographers attempted to create images which looked more like paintings or drawings. Some of the most common techniques that were used to do this included print manipulation as well as deliberately taking the images out of focus or obscuring the lens. A well-known example of pictorial photography is George Davison's photograph *The Onion Field* (1889), which was presented at an exhibition of the Photographic Society of Great Britain in Pall Mall, London, in 1890. The image's soft focus was achieved by using a pinhole lens. Pictorial photography – such as Davison's – highlights the historical desire of some photographers to present the image as both evidence of the land as well as a material which expressed the artistry and embellishment of the scene by the photographer. This is verified by a news report on the painting in the Times on the 29th of September 1890, which is highlighted in the British Journal of Photography: 'the atmospheric effect is admirably rendered, and, looked at from a suitable distance, the picture gives a wonderfully true rendering of the subject,

combining in large proportions the broad effect resulting from skilful artistic treatment with the actual truth in detail of a photograph' (1890).



(Figure 3. The Onion Field, Essex, George Davison, 1890)

By 1889, Dr. Peter Henry Emerson – a seminal figure in the field – had already started moving away from Pictorial Photography and promoting naturalistic representations of the land instead. In his book *Naturalistic Photography for Students of the Art* (1889) he stated that photographers should stop emulating the techniques in painting and start treating photography as an independent form of art in its own right. He believed photographers should strive to communicate something personal through their work and, pertinently, that they should look to the environment for inspiration. This ethos was earnestly pursued by a group of respected photographers called Group f/64²² which included prominent members such as Edward Weston and Ansel Adams, who produced images of the land using the smallest apertures on large format cameras for maximum sharpness and detail. At their 1932 exhibit the group presented their manifesto that highlighted their differences from the Pictorialists; it stated:

²² The name f/64 refers to the corresponding aperture setting for the focal system that was gaining popularity at the time the group was formed. The seven members of the group were: Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham, John Paul Edwards, Sonya Noskowiak, Henry Swift, Willard Van Dyke and Edward Weston.

The Group will show no work at any time that does not conform to its standards of pure photography. Pure photography is defined as possessing no qualities of technique, composition or idea, derivative of any other art form. The production of the "Pictorialist," on the other hand, indicates a devotion to principles of art which are directly related to painting and the graphic arts.

The members of Group f/64 believe that photography, as an art form, must develop along lines defined by the actualities and limitations of the photographic medium, and must always remain independent of ideological conventions of art and aesthetics that are reminiscent of a period and culture antedating the growth of the medium itself.

(in Alinder, 2014: p.88)

The group thought it necessary to strip away any manipulation of an image in the production of the physical photograph; it was their belief that the camera was able to 'see' the world more clearly than the human eye. This was not only because the lens technology allowed the subject to be brought into sharper focus or enlarged to see elements clearer. In the group's effort to present the camera's vision as clearly as possible they advocated the use of aperture f/64 which provided the greatest depth of field, thus allowing for the largest percentage of the picture to be in sharp focus. As one of the group's main affiliates Edward Weston phrased it, 'The camera should be used for a recording of life, for rendering the very substance and quintessence of the thing itself' (Weston in Newhall N, 1981: p.26). It was the group's belief that cameras had an ability to create presentations of the world *as it is* and that it was the duty of the photographer to enable this through what they called pure photographs. Group f/64 predominantly focused their attentions on taking photographs of the land. However, this broad subject produced different kinds of landscape photography. Some images, like Adams' *Dunes, Oceano* (1936) and *Winter Yosemite Valley* (1933-4), position the land at distance far from the camera. This widened the subject to take in more features of the land. The images are topographical in that they present their audience with a broad view of the land's features. Clarity and detail are characteristics of Adams' practice, and his images bring the land into sharp focus. And, yet, within Group f/64's conception of 'pure' photography and the repertoire it

inspired, space was made for photographs which presented images of items from the natural environment, such as plants and pieces of wood, from the anatomy of leaves to the murky crevice between rocks, which would be captured in close up, filling the entirety of the frame. Pictorial Photography and its naturalistic successor are important as they provide the context for understanding how photographers have approached the land as material for artistic expression in different ways.

Certain questions continue to dominate photography (as a discipline) about the most appropriate ways of photographing the land, particularly because common representations are reproduced unquestioned in certain types of marketing or promotional material. I contest that landscape performance, through its documentation, can offer alternatives to common representations of the land and open up new possibilities for interpretation. McAteer generated multiple representations of *Speed of Light* as it moved from Arthur's Seat to new locations, and his images offer a key example of such alternative landscape representation. Much of the photographic documentation of the events, selections of which are displayed in a number of different contexts (the website, Farquhar's blog, a book and other promotional materials), attempt to record and represent the movement of a person through the landscape over time and thus resist presenting landscape as a fixed and stable entity perspective. His images capture light-trails; a technique which corresponds to early experiments in photography where artists would manipulate light to create what became known as light paintings.

LIGHT-TRAILS

In the late 1880s, French scholars Georges Demeny and Étienne-Jules Marey experimented with camera equipment to pioneer photographic techniques with the intention of capturing movement for their research in physiology. Tim Harte states that the pair were 'instrumental in creating "motion" photographs of athletes' (2010, p.265). In 1889 Demeny attached incandescent bulbs to the joints of an assistant and created the first known picture of a light-trail photograph,

entitled *Pathological Walk From in Front*. Although Demeny's photograph was made for academic purposes (as opposed to artistic or aesthetic), the image is significant insofar as it was the first instance that a photo had been made to intentionally produce a visible trace of a movable light source.



(Figure 4. Pathological walk from in front, made visible by incandescent bulbs fixed to the joints, Paris, Étienne-Jules Marey and Georges Demeny, c.1889)

Experiments with photographic equipment continued in the early twentieth-century. However, the creative potential of this method of image capture was not fully realised until 1935 with the work of American avant-garde artist Man Ray. He is attributed as the first artist to use a 'light pen' or 'light brush' in the creation of a series of images he entitled *Space Writing*. Ray used a mobile source of light (a small lamp on a length of wire or a miniature flashlight) which was moved

by the hand of the artist in space - as if the artist was using a brush to paint on an invisible canvas. At slow shutter speeds, the trajectory of a light bulb was recorded as a glowing trail, hanging unsupported in the air. The aesthetic result, according to Patrick Bade, was that the images looked 'fluid and dynamic whereas painting seemed constrained, static'. He states further that for Radnitzky, 'light itself was an instrument' (2011: p.21). The concept of light painting (through the capture of light-trails) has provided a constant source of inspiration for artists and photographers alike for decades and Alan McAteer's photographs are evidence of the desire to continue with the technique in the creation of images today.



(Figure 5. Light painting self-portrait, New York, Man Ray, 1935)

Most cameras share the same basic mechanisms for capturing images: light enters an enclosed box through a converging lens and an image is recorded on a light-sensitive medium. A shutter mechanism controls the length of time that light can enter the camera. As there is less light at night, photographers need to keep the camera shutter open for longer in order to capture any light available in the surrounding area. In environments where there are fewer competing sources of light, those that are available become brighter or overexposed. When a camera is secured on a tripod, any light which moves during the moments that the shutter is open is captured in the image. The trace of the overexposure is a light-trail. The conditions for NVA's *Speed of Light* were ideal for capturing images of light-trails. The performance was at night and all the runners involved in the work were wearing suits which had a number of remotely controlled LED lights attached to them.



(Figure 6. Light-trail A, Alan McAteer, 2012)



(Figure 7. Light-trail B, Alan McAteer, 2012)



(Figure 8. Light-trail C, Alan McAteer, 2012)



(Figure 9. Light-trail D, Alan McAteer, 2012)

All images of light-trails, McAteer's included, are the recorded movement of light during the time that the shutter of the camera was open. In *Speed of Light* the lights are attached to bodies that are running in choreographed patterns. What McAteer captures in his photographs is the way the moving bodies manipulate the light as they cross the terrain. The images themselves are abstract. They do not necessarily show the details of specific people, objects or other corporeal materials on the land. Instead, they show how the light travelled through the land, the pattern of movement undertaken by the participants. The wavy glowing lines in the images represent the up-and-down motion of different running bodies. The images are unstable as it is impossible to replicate the same light-trail twice. Despite the consistency of the method, a wide variety of results are produced. No wavy line is the same as the last, presumably because no person shares the same relationship with the terrain and walks or moves across it in the exact same manner.

The main source of light captured in the images comes from the lights that are attached to the participant. The focus of the representation in the images shifts, then, from the details of the scene – the way the land looks – to the motion of the participants – the way the land is acted on, animated, and travelled through by the active agency of living bodies. By capturing images which focus more on an expression of movement or action as opposed to detailing elements of a scene these images could be said to be more representative of a phenomenological understanding of the landscape, albeit within a limited scope that focuses solely on the representation of bodily movement.

McAteer's images invite a reading (and perhaps even rely on a reading) from a phenomenological perspective to understand what they are trying to represent. Whilst the images fail to fully capture even some of the most fundamental aspects that collectively constitute an embodied experience (such as sound, smell, touch, or other senses) they do still manage to shift the emphasis of representation away from the landscape as an immobile spectacle towards how it might be experienced through movement. The technique for creating the images is not prescriptive of the

outcome and the multiple patterns of weaving lines in all the different photographs resist fixed representations of the landscape in their reluctance to present the details of the topography. The patterns are abstract so we are invited to question their relationship to human bodies and to question their relationship to the land.

THE MESHWORK

Through his conception of the 'meshwork' Tim Ingold argues that the world is made up of a multitude of participants who are all 'threading a line through the world' (Ingold, 2007: p.5), and the striking lines produced by the light-trails perhaps offer a neat visual metaphor for this. It is certainly accurate that the images look more like threads than solid objects and that the trails offer a representation more centred on interconnectedness and flux, but perhaps that is where the metaphor ends. Ingold states that air and water are not objects that act. Rather, they are material media in which living things are immersed, and are experienced by way of their currents, forces and pressure variations. The meshwork invites us to consider the complex relationships at play within the environment of *Speed of Light* or, rather, the kinds of ecology that the performance creates. This insight provides stimulus for a variety of useful questions about the live event itself. For example, what impact did the particular weather conditions have on the runners' ability to move across the terrain and how did that relationship shape their embodiment of the landscape? Did adverse weather conditions require the participants to communicate more with each other, for example, and if so what effect did this have on their understanding of the landscape experience? These questions are not easily answerable but Ingold argues this is: 'actually how it should be...' (2001). For Ingold there is little point in trying to make those kinds of clear distinctions because the lines in the meshwork are always in flux and constantly developing. It is enough to be aware of the complexities and understand that these slippages are integral to the ongoing ecological flow. McAteer's light-trail images are limited in their scope, whilst they can offer valuable representation of the

interconnectedness, there is a clear omission of phenomena like weather and the various influences that would have.

Speed of Light seems to reinforce the phenomenological principle that landscape is in perpetual construction or, as Mitchell puts it, landscape as 'activity' is 'always in a state of becoming' (Mitchell, 1994, p.10). The images do not present the participating figures in a way that suggests a prescriptive type of engagement with the land. It is not clear, for example, whether the participants are running, walking, dancing, crawling, jumping (or any other possible variant for a person to move from point A to point B) across the land: exactly what actions were taken by the participants is not clear from the photographs alone and therefore cannot pin down a specific type of engagement that was happening in that moment. All that is clear is that there is movement of some kind. As you look at the images they seem as if they are still to reach the point of completion, as if the exposed light is still to settle and bring the action into focus. The lack of discernible signification suggests that we are witnessing something that is still being constructed in the moment it was captured. As the meshwork conceptualises a landscape which is always in flux, this presentation seems to be appropriate.

Taking on Ingold's ideas in relation to *Speed of Light* further, I would argue that the performance puts into place a set of conditions for people to interact with their environment and develop (or grow in Ingold's terms) a series of mental and physical connections with the land. Their physical relationship is ever evolving and unfolding as the work progresses. It is necessary, for example, for the participants to work with the specific gradients and properties of Arthurs Seat's slopes and surfaces as they move their way up and down in order that they do not tire out or injure themselves. These properties of Arthur's Seat are not consistent, and specific treatment is required dependent on a host of factors like how long or wet the grass is at a particular point or on a particular day – the relationship is never stable and requires constant concentration to navigate. Beyond the mental tasks involved in moving around on the hill, there are a number of other factors

to be considered, like motivation and emotions that are triggered during the work. It follows from this that the photographic process is a key part of meshwork: the performance event sets up the conditions and, in the instant where McAteer triggers the exposure of light in the environment onto the photosensitive material, the photographer and camera are implicated in the complexity of the landscape performance ecology. In this instance it makes little sense to think of a camera as some kind of 'artificial' object occupying an otherwise 'natural' landscape. It makes more sense to think through Ingold's meshwork and consider the image capture to be part of a trajectory/pathway within an entangled, continually evolving, meshwork. The images become a record of a particular creative entanglement happening at the time, albeit within a limited scope and time frame.

The results of this entanglement – the photographs for *Speed of Light* – are not detailed in ways that offer easy understandings of what the participants are doing. None of the images convey the body in a way that is available – in a semiotic sense – to the reader. Whilst the undulating lines do express something of the movement of a human walking or running, these actions are not entirely fixed in the same way they would be if you saw the participants limbs in a position suggestive of those actions: in their abstractedness there is still opportunity for alternative interpretations. Other representations (like the ones produced by the tourist board) produce a kind of stasis, in that the figures and things within the frame are motionless and stabilised but to read the landscape through McAteer's images is to read of abstract relationships between land and bodies in motion. In order to capture these patterns of movement, the camera had to compromise by reducing the light (and consequently the detail) within the frame to a point where the specific aspects of the land (ground, foliage, sky) become harder to distinguish in the final image. The specificity of the land is almost negated reducing the sense of connection between the land and the moving bodies in a way that might be counterproductive if their primary goal is to offer a record of a live performance event.

That is one of the reasons why NVA relies on a number of different modes of documentation within their methodology; the images do not offer any explicit contextual information for an audience to gain a clear or rational understanding of what they actually refer to. In the majority of the images there is no clear sense of, what Amelia Jones calls, an ‘ontological “anchor”’ (Jones, 1997: p.16). The images rely on other supporting documents to indicate the parameters of the work, which frees McAteer from a responsibility of making such information explicit in the photographs. On all the platforms where the images are presented – the websites and the book – there is written documentation which compensates for the lack of readable information in the photographs. On the website for example, the press releases for each performance are available to download and the links are positioned directly on the right of where the images are presented. A press release is a statement directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something ostensibly newsworthy, but NVA present their press releases to the public as part of their documentary strategy. Each press release contains vital contextual information that makes the images readable as documents of performance:

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| For Edinburgh – | Each night hundreds of runners will activate specially designed light -suits at night, illuminating the hillside. Runners will follow a choreographed series of movements over Arthur’s Seat path network creating an astonishing visual display.
(Farquhar, 2012a). |
| For Yokohama – | In partnership with the British Council, <i>Speed of Light</i> Yokohama will be presented as part of Smart Illumination Yokohama, taking place from 31 October to 4 November 2012... Creative Director Angus Farquhar will collaborate with Japanese choreographer Makiko Izu, Director of Tokyo-based performance company Grinder Man, to develop a unique response.
(Farquhar, 2012b). |
| For Leeds – | Ghost Peloton was today announced as part of the Yorkshire Festival Programme. Taking place on 16th and 17th May 2014 at Waides Yard (former Tetley Brewery)... the work incorporates a riding team of 50 road racers, stunt cyclists and large-scale projection of athletic dancers all utilising unique remote controlled light suits to produce a stunning live choreography.
(Farquhar, 2014) |

NVA make their press releases available as a strategy for providing essential information that contextualises their work and all the documentation related to it. The images are given meaning in relation to their corresponding press release.

This is a direct strategy, placing the company's desired interpretations of the work at the forefront in order to frame the work in their own terms. They present what they think are the virtues and importance of the work so that they are not missed by those reading, keen to limit the possibility of readings other than those the company have created themselves. Whilst the above examples offer the factual components of the press releases (those elements that give the factual and contextual information) these documents include a fair amount of 'spin' as well, see the Yokohama press release: 'Sparkling lines of runners... will create a stunning visual language across a series of landmark sites' (Farquhar, 2012b). This further demonstrates the company's eagerness to set the terms and scope of the work and its possible interpretations. Nevertheless, the strategy also allows McAteer to explore and experiment with different ways of photographing the work. NVA were keen for the *Speed of Light* images to have their own artistic autonomy or, in other words, disrupting the ontological priority of the live event to be produced as artworks in their own right. And the fact that the contextual information is provided in other ways means that McAteer does not have to try and produce images which convey that kind of detail and information. It would have been entirely expected (given documentation from previous NVA works) for the company to ask their photographer to create images of the work that draw attention to the particularities of each separate location but to do so would limit the range of perspectives available.

McAteer's photographs are evocative and invite a range of imaginative responses of what might have taken place in each location to produce such forms. The light-trails in McAteer's images are similar to the white lines drawn around dead bodies at a crime scene; they mark where a body has been whilst drawing attention to the spectre of the action or movement which is no longer possible or present. Pearson and Shanks state that a chalk outline upon the ground at the scene of a

crime marks the body as a 'ghostly presence' because it 'leaves traces and upon which traces are laid' (2001: p.177). McAteer's images are marks on and of a body (or bodies) which are a 'key to a past, a history, a memory' (ibid). The key difference is that where Pearson and Shanks' white lines are drawn around a body that is immobile and motionless, the lines captured in the *Speed of Light* images are tracing a living, moving, sentient being. In both cases though, the body is a haunting figure because of its absence. Both mark the presence of something which is no longer there to be seen. On the other hand, the chalk around the crime scene body is usually marking the point at which something or someone has ended. Whilst the light gives us a clue to the event that took place, the action that might have happened there, the body haunts the images precisely because it is not available to see. The absence of the body from the McAteer's images could be seen to deny a phenomenological emphasis, as phenomenology is constituted by its emphasis on embodied experience. However I contest first, that McAteer's images suggest on-going action and movement (as was discussed earlier in the chapter). Secondly, the images leave space for an audience to imagine action into the image. Looking at the images they evoke in the mind an idea of the multiple actions that haunt the landscape, like the thousands who continue to run and walk up Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh or move through the city in Yokohama on a daily (or nightly) basis. The choreographed movement of the work provides the source but not the detail for the images; the patterns of light allow an audience to project their own interpretations and ideas of movement into the images.

It is also possible that the connection between McAteer's images and the information provided in the press releases may provoke an altogether different set of responses. Just as the press releases present NVA's direct interpretational guide for the work, other promotional materials provide a similar function. Consistently throughout the promotional materials, Farquhar uses terms like 'the emerging mass identity' of the running participants and their 'collective experience' of the work. This language seems to suggest that the work somehow unifies a group of individual runners and shifts them towards a singular homogenous identity. This idea is reinforced when Farquhar states that together the company and the running participants are 'standing as more than the sum

of our parts' (2013: p.2). When read in conjunction with the regimented choreography of the running bodies and the depersonalisation of the participants in the images, Farquhar's language opens the work up to more sinister readings; they may configure the work as a mass collective spectacle – like Nazi rallies, or Soviet displays. It is clear then, that complex and contradictory messages can be read in the images and other documentation.

These choices can be explained in practical terms though: in order to co-ordinate the large number of running participants for all the *Speed of Light* events, it was necessary to generate a system by which a complicated choreography could be easily conveyed to lots of people in a limited amount of time. A simple strategy was employed to combat the difficulty. Rather than teaching hundreds of participants the entire choreography, instead a number of 'run leaders' was selected to learn the choreography and lead the lines on the nights of the performance. The rest of the participants would follow one-after-the-other behind the leader. The need for order and control in such a large scale event led to a process which prevented more spontaneous movement outside the organised structure. The uniformity of the system is reflected in the images. Even despite the practical reasons, the work cannot escape a sense of a unified group of people which has overtones of homogenisation, and (in its most extreme interpretation) totalitarianism. It is clear from what has been discussed so far that in one respect the images focus the audience's attention on the pattern of movement. However, another way to understand them is that, by taking the individual out of the representation, the company are making claims that the landscape can unify people into a singular way of thinking or acting, thus linking with the uniformity of the choreography and affirming those particular connotations. A primary concern of this is whether the uniformity of McAteer's light-trail images fails to reflect the personality of the running participants (and the 'personality' of the more-than-human 'landscape') and their relationship with the land and with other running participants. This alternative interpretation emphasises the possibilities open to these abstract photographs even in spite of the company's best attempts to mediate readings of the work.

In Andrew Filmer's paper, 'On the Move: The performance of running' (2013), he described his experience of *Speed of Light* as both an audience member and a participant in the version on Arthur's Seat. He explained that, for him, the task of running in choreographed patterns whilst trying to navigate the difficult terrain of Arthur's Seat required him to develop and maintain a particular kind of spontaneous relationship with both his fellow running participants and the land he was running on. There were guidelines for the runners and a particular proxemic relationship to maintain with those in front and behind them. Filmer explains that once the performance had started, the runners themselves paid little or no attention to the overall aesthetic spectacle they were each contributing to. This was due to their preoccupation with the difficulties of staying on their feet and dealing with the obstacles put in their way by the mountain (such as loose rocks or uneven paths). Filmer stated that he was focused on the primary task of running up the hill and explained that the lights helped him in this task by illuminating his path and allowing him to see the safest place to position his feet.

He further explained the kind of relationship the participants had to build in order to complete the choreography of the performance and what impact that had on his understanding of the work. Each runner had to listen and watch the person in front for any warnings of danger, change in direction, or words of encouragement at particularly steep sections on their route. These messages would then be communicated down to the person behind, and so on. Filmer stated that the completion of the choreography at the end of the performance gave a sense of both individual and shared accomplishment to the group of runners and they congratulated and thanked each other for their advice and encouragement during the task. It seems that what emerged from *Speed of Light*, for Filmer was an emphasis on the ways that the landscape forced those participating in the performance to communicate with each other and work together as a team. The participants' abilities to complete the choreography whilst working through the difficult conditions of the site was rewarded at the end by a sense of developed community.

Neither the communication between moving bodies, the sense of physical difficulty, or the developed relationships between the participants – in other words, the factors which seem to give rise to the primary meanings of the landscape expounded by the performance – are not easily (if at all) identifiable in McAteer's images. The visual representations do not make available the physical strain or the difficulty of the task, nor do they show the sense of community between the participants, which enabled the execution of the choreography. Whatever might be read from McAteer's images, what is clear is that they certainly work against the familiarised pictures of the landscape in order to focus more on the representation of the movement on and through the land. However, the photographs do also draw attention - through absence - to the limits of this type of representation. Almost as soon as the argument is made for why these images constitute an experiential representation of landscape we are forced to consider what experiences are absent from the images, and what photographs - more generally - are unable to capture. So much of the experience and meaning of the performance is absent in McAteer's photographs and the representation of the participant's embodied experience seemingly negated in the photograph.

Again, NVA provide a further, different kind of documentation in an attempt to compensate for this. In a document entitled *Speed of Light Round Up*, which is available to download from their website, there are a number of participant responses gained through feedback from both runners and audience members. The responses are presented to give a voice to the otherwise body-less representations of the running participants and to give the audience of the documentation a sense of what their experience was like. Some examples include:

Katie Philips, runner, said: '*Speed of Light* was amazing, was truly great to be part of something so monumental.'

David Griffith, runner, said: 'NVA's *Speed of Light* was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I was thrilled to participate in this mass public art & sporting event as a runner in last night's performance. It rocked!'

Rachel Davis, runner, said: 'Before training for *Speed of Light* I hadn't run for about 20 years, but now I've realised how much fun it is, I'm going to carry on. Who'd have thought running up hills could be so much fun?'

At least two things are immediately apparent in the presented feedback: the first is the distinct lack of any real description or detail on the participants' experience of running and the second is the positivity with which the runners describe the work and its impact on them. The feedback does not contribute to an audience's understanding of *how* or *why* the light-trails in McAteer's images correspond to a 'once-in-a-lifetime experience' nor does it provide any clear indication of what experience the runners would have had. The only thing gained from this feedback is a set of qualitative judgements about a piece of work they were actively involved in. It is important too to remember that NVA have total control over what pieces of collected feedback they select to present in the public domain, so it is perhaps unsurprising that they chose to select particularly positive comments to include whilst we might reasonably assume (with over 4000 participants in the project) that many responses were left out of the document. We can deduce that – although the feedback is presented from the perspective of a participant – the purpose of such contribution is not to provide an audience with an idea of the work or to detail the runner's involvement but rather to promote the benefits of being involved in the project. Perhaps this was done with the possibility of future versions of the work and the desire to attract new participants for the next instalment in mind.

UNOFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION

The experience of the runners during the performance remains determinately underrepresented within NVA's documentary approach and it is difficult to get a sense of what the work would have been like for those who were participating in it from the collection of documents accumulated and presented by the organisation. Interestingly, the best representation of the runners' embodied experience seems to come in the form of unofficial documents – or documents that were not created or presented by the organisation – documents that were generated by the

running participants themselves. There are a number of images and videos that were captured during the performance work that have now been shared over the internet on platforms like Vimeo and Youtube.

In one short fourteen minute clip uploaded to Youtube by a runner by the name of Loupe Garoue, we witness a group of runners at the start of the performance as they begin to run up the hill. The low resolution of the video suggests that the footage was captured on a camera phone from the perspective of a runner. This idea is further reinforced by the shakiness of the footage which indicates that the device was not mounted on a tripod for stabilisation but instead was held in the hand of one of the running participants. Although we cannot hear the specifics of the runners' conversations, it is possible to discern a casual tone to their chatter. We also get a sense of the wind as it blows into the microphone creating a loud disruptive noise. The video captures the moment that each runner begins their choreographed score one-after-the-other with regimented precision. This short video (along with other similar examples) provides a clearer representation of the work from the perspective of the runners involved. The footage seems unfiltered and uncut; the viewer gets a sense of the conditions unmediated by electronic music that usually accompanies NVA's official documentation. The video has a voyeuristic tone; it does not feel as though this footage was created for public viewing and the other participants in the video do not seem aware that there is a camera capturing their actions. All of the above adds to a sense that the video is offering a representation of the performance unfiltered by the functions of DSLR camera equipment or the artistic eye of a professional photographer. It favours representation of the heaving, effort and breathlessness involved in carrying out the choreography, providing an insight into what the runners were seeing, hearing and doing during this small section of the performance. Why such representations were not accounted for in the official collection and presentation of the *Speed of Light* documentation is unclear but, given that these unofficial videos present a level of effort and difficulty not seen in anything presented by NVA, it would be reasonable to suggest that the

company feared that such representations would put off future participants from signing up to collaborate.

It seems that whilst *Speed of Light's* photographs shift their representational emphasis towards showing an experience of landscape through the capture of light-trails, and do represent the movement of bodies through the landscape, they fall short in their ability to present even some of the most fundamental aspects of the landscape experience. Certain key factors, which had a direct bearing on the work, are noticeably absent in the photographic representations (such as the ways that the performance felt, smelled, sounded, the impact of weather or gradient of the slope). The strength of *Speed of Light* as an ephemeral art event seems to hinge on the way the work brings together and interweaves a range of human and non-human processes, the complexity of which highlights the paradoxes and limitations of photography and other documentation. We get more of a sense of the conditions and the experience of the work from the unofficial documentation, the expressive light-trails are replaced with a much clearer matter-of-fact representation of what a runner would have actually seen and heard. Although not officially sanctioned, the videos do help to construct a more accurate presentation of the actual experience of the runner during the performance and what is clear is that the experience was not nearly as pretty or as smooth and flowing as McAteer's images present.

Authenticity becomes an interesting concept in relation to NVA's documentary materials and perhaps Farquhar would challenge what authenticity means in relation to the documentation they created for *Speed of Light*. Certainly, the photographic representations are at odds, in both form and style, with the unofficial documentary footage but are McAteer's photographs unauthentic performance documentations? If we are to insist on a principle of authenticity when considering performance documentation, we must ask ourselves whether we believe authenticity to reside in the circumstances of the underlying performance, which may or may not be evident from the documentation, or whether authenticity should be understood according to a different kind of

criterion. I introduced Philip Auslander and his article 'The Performativity of Performance Documentation' (2006) in the introduction; it is pertinent to briefly revisit this in regards to NVA's documentation. Auslander contends that the key relationship when thinking about performance documentation is not the one between document and performance but the relationship between document and its audience. He argues that documentation has its own value as an art object and that, perhaps, 'the authenticity of the performance document resides in its relationship to its beholder rather than to an ostensibly originary event' (Auslander, 2006: p.84-85). In other words, documentation has its own value as an art object and should be treated as such, rather than as a subsidiary extension of a live event. He takes this argument further when he states, rather provocatively, that the 'pleasures' of performance 'are available from the documentation and therefore do not depend on whether an audience witnessed the original event (Auslander, 2006: p.84-85). To articulate his point Auslander uses Yves Klein's *Leap into the Void* (1960) photograph which seemingly shows the artist jumping head first from a second story window onto the pavement below. The image gives the impression that the artist is moments away from imminent impact with the concrete ground below. In actuality the picture was a composite of two different images merged in a dark room which erased the safety net used by the artist in the making of the work. For Auslander, this image perfectly articulates his position that the audience of the photograph did not need to be present at the moment that Klein was staging the photograph for them to understand or get pleasure from the image. He goes as far as to suggest that images 'may not even depend on whether the event actually happened' (ibid). This seems quite fair in the case of Klein's image because the intrigue is central to its success, knowing that it was a composite of two images takes away from its mystery. This line of argument leads us to question the ontological priority of the live event over McAteer's images – that is, the propensity to think of images (or other documentary materials) as being secondary to the live event that they were created from and/or refer to. Is it important to know, for example, that the light-trail images are composed from runners who were participating in a live performance? It does not seem so. The relationship between body and land are

also replaced by the desire to produce vibrant abstract patterns and shapes. McAteer's photographs seem to work whether you are aware that they are composed from and refer to a prior live event. It is clear that the organisation hope their photographic documentation will inspire a different kind of relationship with its audience. McAteer's images do intend to produce an idea of *Speed of Light* but not one which illustrates the details of the scene or that presents a realistic account of the events as they took place. Instead, the images focus on the presentation of movement and expression. The photographs are purposeful; they intend to produce an expressive representation of both performance and landscape. Through an emphasis on representing the movement of running bodies, McAteer manages to create a useful alternative to the dominant modes of landscape representation, which also invites us to question the purpose and limits of documentation in a broader sense. It is also clear that NVA attempt to produce different layers of documentation which all contribute to an understanding of the performance work. There are conflicting messages about *Speed of Light* presented across various materials, further attesting to the plurality of interpretation.

THE GRIM RUNNER BLOG

Farquhar's running blog, *The Grim Runner* (Farquhar, 2016), provides another significant layer of documentation, which builds on this complexity. *The Grim Runner* accompanies the other *Speed of Light* materials, and web links to the blog are intended to direct the audience's attention away from the factual descriptions of the press releases and McAteer's images to a different commentary on the work altogether. The blog is a place for the creative director to lay out his aspirations and expectations of his performance work, to respond to any criticisms and to provide further explanations and descriptions of the *Speed of Light* project and his involvement in it. The blog recounts a series of episodes from the creative process for the project: these distinctive stories are held together by a larger narrative of Farquhar's marathon training. The fact that Farquhar's blog focuses on running is significant as Lorimer posits that distance runners create the kind of conditions that enable useful responses to landscape. He states that a long distance runner is:

a highly accomplished sensualist, as someone who comes to know the variety of the world according to the feeling of differently textured terrains – bare rock, sand, soil, concrete – and the kinds of ecology that grow through them. Since, by my reckoning, an appreciation of what is underfoot – as much as what is overhead – alters runners' moods. In short, the experience of running is underscored by surfaces. Taken by this measure, it seems only reasonable to rank runners as well-schooled students of terra firma, using feet and legs as sensory devices.

(Lorimer, 2012: p.83)

By weaving together a series of anecdotes and topographical descriptions of unconquerable or 'grim' landscapes, Farquhar frames the blog and the live *Speed of Light* events inside a larger personal narrative about his experience as an amateur marathon runner.

The emergence of phenomenological and non-representational theories (as discussed in the introduction) has led to a re-evaluation of narrative as a method for analysing landscape and/or performance. Stephen Daniels and Hayden Lorimer point out in 'Until the End of Days: Narrating Landscape and Environment' that originally 'geographers had little room for narrative' and 'few reflected on, or analysed, the nature and value of narrative as a form of exposition or interpretation' (2012, p.3). This argument is further contended by David Harvey who stated that narrative was a poor method for landscape analysis and that any 'verbal sketch' should be 'filled out through more powerful, quantitative models of temporal explanation' (1969, p.421). However, Daniels and Lorimer have gone on to suggest – in light of phenomenological and non-representational theories and a growing interest in cross-disciplinary exploration – that narrative should be reconsidered as a method of analysis. They state that alongside archaeology and theatre research, performance studies 'has accommodated different forms of storytelling into a wider narrative realm, in part to articulate its elusive nature, between exposition and reconstitution, "at once a doing and the thing done"' (2012: p.6). While the doing may involve various ways of telling in dramaturgical practice, so performance survives as a cluster of narratives, those of the watchers and the watched, and all those who facilitate their interaction (see Pearson and Shanks, 2001: p.14). What is clear is that there is a

new narrative space opening up across the humanities which provides scope to address and question official or established stories of places. This means that narrative has been and is being adopted as a method of landscape analysis and, although it was not necessarily Farquhar's intention, the form of his blog usefully demonstrates how conflicting narratives help us gain a greater understanding of performance and landscape.

The Grim Runner blog allows Farquhar to shape *Speed of Light* around a much longer and more detailed personal story about his own trials and tribulations as an emphatic running enthusiast. Through his telling of personal experiences and descriptions of places, Farquhar both situates the work within his own parameters and contextualises the live performance events for his online audience. In a blog post published on the 12th March 2013, Farquhar provides an insight into the origins of *Speed of Light*, the idea that initiated the work. The performance, it emerges, stemmed from a singular fixation on the idea of bodily endurance:

When I was first dreaming up the ideas for *Speed of Light* I became fixated on endurance. I had done a few marathons but what really excited me was the notion of what happens if you set out to run and just don't stop.

(Farquhar, 2016)

He describes how he aimed to set out conditions that would allow him to participate in his own work. Farquhar wanted to run 'back-to-back half marathons on every day of *Speed of Light* (21km over 21 days) medically monitoring its effects' (ibid). The theme of endurance is reinforced in subsequent posts where Farquhar's desire to test the limits of his body are made clear and he weaves a narrative that foregrounds the *Speed of Light* concept within a realm of motivation, challenge and expression of personal interest in endurance. He wants to make clear that the basis of the work comes from the body and not from the desire to create an aesthetic effect. The blog offers Farquhar a platform to present a personal commentary on his activity and experience as a runner, and how it relates to his creative work. It is clearly written from his subjective position, striking a more personal tone than the officially sanctioned documentation presented on the NVA website.

Given the ability to access the internet and a variety of outlets with relative ease, it is now common practice for many performance makers to use blogs or other digital platforms to publish ideas and reflections on their creative process (including Simon Whitehead²³ and Wrights' & Sites'²⁴ whose work is the focus of the following chapters). These reflections are often written from the perspective of the artist-as-artist. That is, that they contextualise their reflections within the frame of their developing practice in the moments when the practice was taking place and often within the context of their particular working environment such as a studio, rehearsal room or other locations of experiment and material generation, that is, the times and spaces where *the work* was happening. Farquhar's blog differs in that it is predominantly written from the perspective of an artist who has stepped away from the working environment, as if describing the work to a family member or friend who is not an active participant in it. Farquhar's blog is more closely aligned in tone and subject matter to the collection of letters written by Van Gogh to his brother Theo and other artist friends, than the more conventional commentaries of performance processes such as those offered by fellow director Tim Etchells whose essays and performance texts, detailing the collaborative practices of Forced Entertainment, were collated into a book entitled *Certain Fragments* (1999). Farquhar's blog focuses more on discussing his life and work as they pertain to his broader artistic ambitions than a more focused critique of his working processes.

A number of recurring motifs appear in Farquhar's writing. The theme of endurance for example, is consistent throughout the blog and Farquhar slips in and out of descriptions of his body as he discusses his running experiences. In a post from May 2013, Farquhar reflects on the pain and pleasure sensations he experienced when he was running in the Edinburgh Marathon:

The last 15 minutes and Peter is exhorting me to keep my form
and keep steady. I can't really respond, not out of rudeness,

²³ His Untitled States website (shared with Barnaby Oliver) has an entire section dedicated to 'process' as well as a notebook which can be downloaded.

²⁴ Wrights & Sites have a website which encourages participants to submit documentation of their walking experiences and Phil Smith, one of their core members, uses the online social networking site, Facebook, to present and archive images and reflections from his walks.

but because all my energy is focussed on not cracking, just holding this mass of pain and sensation and intensity together for as long as it takes. I long to smile at the crowds lining the streets during the last mile but I have to stay inside and keep things in check. Peter says we are going to do it and as we round the bend onto the playing field with the finish line in sight a wave of joy comes over me.

(Farquhar, 2016)

Farquhar helps to build a narrative world around *Speed of Light* which is primarily concerned with the ways that the land can test and push bodies to their limits. It is a story that positions him as the protagonist, a challenger, training for the task. In the earlier blog posts he provides accounts of an increased training regime in preparation for the performance: 'My training builds up through a 2011 season of personal bests aged 49, leading to two marathons in four months' (ibid). The blog fits within a wide spectrum of popular runners' training diaries that are available online. The Guardian newspaper, for example, runs a regular running blog in their online lifestyle segment (The Guardian Running Blog, 2018), which features a variety of writers posting under the title 'How was your weekend running?' as well as articles, interviews and opinion pieces on running by professional athletes. Farquhar's blog aligns with this content, particularly those which discuss personal bests, marathon medals and the tears that come with them.

Within the context of Farquhar's blog, the performance is positioned specifically as something which will allow him to test his capabilities and he explains that the intention is that *Speed of Light* is designed to present the same conditions for others who want to participate in the challenge of the performance. It not only provides vital contextual information, giving the performance a story of origin, but also helps, through a narrative of endurance, pain and suffering, to encourage an emphasis on embodiment.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

However, the narrative of *The Grim Runner* is not stable. The themes of the blog shift and slip, the tone changes and shapes how we understand *Speed of Light* and the ideas of landscape that

emerge from it. The blog switches at points into a mode of narration that is distinctly autobiographical. By this, I mean that the writing is more focused on Farquhar than the places he inhabits. Farquhar moves away from descriptions of his running experience to focus more on discussing ongoing health battles and hospital trips. His injuries provide temporary (but frequent) space within the blog and this allows for more reflective/personal stories to emerge. Dee Heddon argues in 'Autotopography: The Place of Self' (2006) that autobiography is a creative act, 'an act of selecting, of ordering, of editing, of wilfully forgetting, of embellishing, of invention'. The act of writing about one's self, Foucault argues, 'permits individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being' (Foucault, 1988: p.18). Key to this is the sense of control that a person has to determine how their story is told and what aspects and experiences they want to share. In this sense, autobiography: 'produces a life, rather than the other way round. It is not the self, then, that writes an autobiography but an autobiography that writes a certain self' (Heddon: 2006).

Selecting what to divulge is central in shaping biographical writings. Fragility, absence and memory are the predominant subjects conveyed by Farquhar's autobiographical reflections and remain consistent motifs throughout *The Grim Runner*. These subjects are expressed in two separate ways: the first is through accounts of hospital trips and lists of hopes and fears in relation to Farquhar's health. The second is through an emphasis on recounting memories of more youthful exploits to juxtapose his continued focus on immobility. These autobiographical interventions in the blog leads to the growing sense that Farquhar longs to rekindle the kinds of relationship he had with the landscape denied to him through poor health. Farquhar's narrative shifts entirely from the enthusiasm of earlier blog posts when he begins to write about a series of injuries that has rendered him unable to run. He also draws on an imminent operation designed to re-align the bones in his foot. This surgery would prevent him from participating in *Speed of Light*, at least not in the way he envisioned. He certainly would not be able to run a marathon a day for the 30 days of the performance run. In a post on the 28th of March 2012 Farquhar first introduces the injury on his foot

into *The Grim Runner* grand narrative and we see a notable shift from the enthusiasm and positivity of his earlier posts. He states, rather dramatically:

Well they say every dog has his day and this dog has definitely had his.

A normal injury you can run through and it often passes, but this had a dull persistence, especially at 3am in the morning. I had an appointment with Dr Google... It's always a good moment when you know what's wrong but all it really means is pain in your foot...

So, that's it, marathon hopes for May in Edinburgh out of the window and a zero in my running log for the first time in over two years. I began to trace the causes and effect. It's blindingly obvious really, I'm 50 years old, ran three marathons and 1,560 miles last year without injury, oh and my first left toe has never touched the ground.

(Farquhar, 2016)

What is noticeable is that Farquhar still draws attention to his body, as he did in earlier posts. He still is describing the relationship his body has within the landscape, but as he is told he is not allowed to run, he becomes more graphic in descriptions of his body parts. In a post from the 26th of June an entry shows a particularly worried and dejected Farquhar, who states:

You've either got the wrong job or the wrong foot" said Dr Kumar, a Glasgow Orthopaedic surgeon. With a wry smile I replied that I'm not changing my work so he might as well cut it off. Minutes earlier he had told me that it was unlikely I could ever run a marathon again and I would not be able to walk in 10 years' time without surgery. Without exaggeration I can say that the prognosis is not looking too good.

(ibid)

In an extract from the 30th of July 2012 Farquhar explains, in a rather graphic manner, the details of an operation he will have to have on his foot:

I feel quite accepting and must be careful not to become hyper-sensitised to sensations in the foot or become a '*foot-bore*' in public. I can already wax lyrical about the hallux valgus

on the MTPJ and the lateral pull on the hallucis brevis tendon...
My feet are relatively soft and will need years of retraining. I
will not be able to run for three months after the operation. It
will involve removal of the bunion, breaking and resetting the
first toe and doing the same with a wire in the second and then
taking the offending nerve out to eradicate the neuroma.
There is an 80% chance of success.

(ibid)

If, as Heddon suggests, emphasis on autobiographical writings is placed on the choices of *what* to tell and *when* to tell it, it is evident that Farquhar uses these detailed descriptions of his body, at least in part, to justify the blogs 'Grim' title.²⁵ Farquhar's language becomes increasingly graphic in each new post. He becomes more explicit as he reflects on his injuries and details his pain. Through Farquhar's discussions of disappointment and his imagining of what-might-have-been, the running participants in *Speed of Light* are brought into focus and become projections of Farquhar's own desire. They epitomise everything that he wanted and now is unable to become. He discusses how, in the wake of an operation to his foot, he 'started smoking, put on a stone in weight' (ibid). He articulates his simultaneous envy and admiration of the runners who would participate in the work that he designed: 'I look at the run leaders as some sort of running demi-gods doing what I could not take forward. Their bodies tuned in that moment to accept their obsessive physical demands' (ibid).

If the first set of posts focused primarily on endurance through a clear focus on a bodily engagement with the landscape, then this second set of autobiographically centred posts are more directly dealing with themes of loss and absence. There is a notable lack of description or observations that detail the land, reflecting the fact that Farquhar is unable to travel to different locations to continue his running practice. His inability to engage with landscapes is made clear through the detailed descriptions of his body-in-pain.

²⁵ Although, it is true that grim also presents a host of other connotations: the Grim Reaper, the Grimm brothers collected fairy tales, or the kind of grim discoveries found at crime scenes.

MEMORY AND NOSTALGIA

To heighten or personify his growing sense of disappointment and absence from landscape engagement, Farquhar introduces a new temporal dimension to the blog through a description of personal memories. These memories almost supplement the absence of any direct contact with the landscape. Mitchell notes, memory has been 'perhaps the strongest focus of landscape research in the past few years – landscape as a concretisation and maker of memory' (2003: p.790). In many respects Farquhar's recounting of past memories seems to reflect a desire to return to his younger body, and psychologist Charles Fernyhough (2012) discusses this possibility in his work which explores how memories return us imaginatively to our past selves. He states:

When I cast back to an event from my past... I am somehow able to reconstruct the moment in some of its sensory detail, and relive it, as it were, from the inside. I become a time traveller who can return to the present as soon as the demands of "now" intervene.

Farquhar's blog articulates his tendency to think back to past memories in which he was more agile and capable to run and move in the ways that he would like and offers an outlet for him to share these reconstructed moments. Daniels and Lorimer discuss the ways that memories are interwoven in writings about landscape. They state that 'stories might be read in discontinuous, non-chronological ways, as spaces between images as well as what is shown' (2012: p.7). Farquhar uses memories within his blog to heighten the emotional impact of not being able to run and to draw more attention to the effect it is having on his life. In a post from the 3rd of December 2011 Farquhar draws on memory. In it, he narrates a story from 1977 when he ran in his schools cross country race:

I've surprised myself by being about seventh in the field and I can see runners strung out in front of me as we cross Inverleith Park towards the finishing stretch. There are big gates that we have to exit on the opposite side. A teacher stands by the path making sure that no one sneaks through the hedge cutting off a few yards. As I pass him he leans towards me and whispers "You're finished Farquhar".

For the last year I had been one of the five school punks and this particular maths master, 'Oink' as we called him, had really grown to hate me. He wore ultra-establishment Clydesdale checked shirts, a tightly knotted tie, a tweed jacket and he ran the school cadet forces. He was everything I wasn't and he had a fearsome temper to boot. That's how I remember him.

I was a real mess, my dad had died recently, I was smoking too much dope and was probably pretty disruptive and hard to teach. But my god did his words get to me. I set my face in a twisted grimace and started sprinting from that point with a mile to go, I reeled runner after runner in, people who were far better athletes than me, but I was screaming my anger out, not just at those words, but at everything in my life. I collapsed over the line in third place and was promptly sick. That moment was the only significant thing I ever really achieved in any sport in ten years of school life.

(Farquhar, 2016)

Nostalgia is described as 'an emotional yearning for times and places that can never be attained' (Hogan, 2007: p.69). There is a clear emphasis on nostalgia in this post Farquhar celebrates this significant act of defiance from his adolescence. Telling such a story helps to articulate the importance he gives to the act of running on a personal level. For Stephen Legg, these types of examinations into issues of nostalgia and memory reveal 'the importance of space and place, not just as weak metaphors, but as formative factors in thinking about the presentness of the past' (2007: p.456). Farquhar's perceptions and relationship to place is often detailed and told in his blog through his acts of running. By recounting memories of past running experience, Farquhar draws attention first to the fact that he is speaking of actions which he is not, at present, able to do and also how, through a lack of interaction between body and place, his memories of running occupy more space in his conscience than in his daily life.

In another post Farquhar brings memory into his narrative during his description of the opening night of the *Speed of Light* performance on Arthur's Seat in August 2012. Here we see the articulation of Jones, who states: 'memory (of one kind or another) is then a fundamental aspect of becoming, intimately entwined with space, affect, emotion, imagination and identity' (Jones, 2011:

p. 880). Farquhar aims to cement his presentness in Edinburgh and on Arthur's Seat by telling a story that places him in the exact same place years previously. During the post he describes in detail the positive response to the work so far and some of the challenges and moments that were most pertinent on the night (such as walking up the hill with his children). When discussing his director's speech he states:

The opening night was pretty overwhelming, I got up to speak in front of ministers, funders, friends and supporters and suddenly remembered the image of being on the summit of the hill behind me as a five year old boy with my dad and sisters. Beaming smiles carried away in the wind. Time telescoped and I was too choked to speak. Just remembering my dad, Peter, who we all lost too young. Getting back to the speech was like coming back from the edge of an abyss to a safer place again.

(Farquhar, 2016)

Here Farquhar's memories are interwoven into his present relationship with Arthur's Seat. It would be natural to react with sympathy as he organises accounts of his operation together with memories of sensitive moments from the past. The absence of Farquhar's body on the landscape is poetically mirrored by the absence of his father at the event. It is a sentimental reflection which highlights that landscape can 'function as memorial sites in which dominant cultural values are asserted and reproduced' (Wylie, 2007: p.192). Farquhar's account helps establish some of the cultural values that Wylie alludes to. By evoking the memory of his father, Farquhar reinforces Arthur's Seat, through his *Speed of Light* experience, as a landscape deeply connected to family values, endeavour, and heroism.

And yet, there is a strange duality in the blog because although many posts draw on fragility and scenes of absence and melancholy, there are many other posts that do the exact opposite. Although Farquhar informs his reader that problems with his foot have rendered his running practice 'well and truly crocked' (Farquhar, 2016), he also deflates that position by continuing to run (and enjoy running) which he describes in other posts. In the grander narrative of blog, Farquhar has his

operation, it is a success, and he also finds that running barefoot – even against his doctor’s wishes – gives him an opportunity to rekindle relationships with his favourite landscapes:

I run barefoot through muddy orchards, I try a rough field and spend 10 minutes hopping this way and that to avoid twigs, thistles, nettles and sheep-shit. I try a lower paddock and get rammed by a sheep and have to sprint and vault a fence swearing my head off to get it away from behind me. Barefoot running, it’s nothing if not adventurous - I must have managed about a mile in 30 minutes!

(Farquhar, 2016)

It becomes clear as the blog moves on that Farquhar regains his mobility and posts that proclaim dire warnings of not being able to walk become far less frequent. The negative tones are replaced by more positive assertions that Farquhar is gaining new relationships with the land through barefoot running. Smith asserts that such differences may be expected, stating: ‘There are many stories to be told and many different and divergent storytelling occasions that call for and forth contextually marked and sometimes radically divergent narratives of identity’ (Smith, 1998: p.109). The discussion of the aches, pains and foot operations are in stark difference to those in which Farquhar describes his barefoot journeys and running experiences. The different posts seem to reflect two seemingly separate aspects of Farquhar’s personality which, as it might in real life, fluctuate depending on his mood and abilities, and it is perhaps unsurprising that the posts are at their most positive when he is describing his experience of running and the landscapes that emerge from running. What an audience gains from reading this information is an interesting counterpoint to the much grander narratives of *Speed of Light* presented in the press-releases on the website. The audience of the blog learn about a far more complex relationship shared between Farquhar and the land – a relationship he gains through running, the action of the performance, which is coincidentally the action that presents him with so much physical pain. Farquhar’s focus on pain and endurance perhaps situates the work within a much wider discussion about the ways that landscape is linked to ideas of masculinity. Often the focus of feminist critique, certain areas of landscape research focuses on the symbolic and material gendering of urban landscapes within Western societies, exploring the

ways that they operate on a patriarchal, male-dominated, basis. This leads into a broader discussion of how such gendering interweaves with the histories and politics of the built environment more generally. It would be fair to ask in what ways Farquhar's blog posts, which so often relate to classic macho-heroic archetypes, work towards a complex gendering of landscape as masculine.

Lorimer argues that the use of narrative across the humanities provides 'scope to address and question official or established stories of places, deploying history against heritage, or, from a pluralistic perspective in which all grand narratives are suspect, of opening a space for many kinds of story, personal and political, biographical and environmental' (2012: p.13). I would suggest that *the Grim Runner* also performs a similar function as it can be read as a counter-narrative to any "official" accounts of the *Speed of Light*, both on a personal and promotional level. *The Grim Runner* blog also disrupts any notion that *Speed of Light* is something easily defined, a neat book-ended project that simply meets the criteria and fulfils the objectives. Using anecdotal information laced with his own subjective views and political opinions, Farquhar provides a contested and unstable narration which makes it impossible to reduce the work into a singularly definable object.

Farquhar presents the work and his involvement in it as an ever-evolving relationship, a relationship that is both rewarding and punishing, that can be both grand and subtle, and that foregrounds both experience and spectacle. At many points throughout the blog Farquhar offers a commentary on the process or work which subverts the official accounts of what the work is doing and what impact it is trying to make. Throughout the blog, for example, Farquhar posits that *Speed of Light* is about running as an embodied practice and the experience of endurance that the runners have in order to complete the choreography; not a visual spectacle. He states that the performance work is an 'exceptional running experience' and that 'those who climb high expecting to be entertained by some spectacular show are likely to be let down or confused. I actually hate the word spectacular and see it as an insult to what we are attempting on the hill' (Farquhar, 2016). Yet, Farquhar undermines his own position in the many descriptions of the work which describe it as

something profoundly visual. He states on NVA's official website that: '...*Speed of Light* dwells in the realms of visual phenomena (the sheer beauty of seeing hundreds of runners on a mountain like small dots of light within a field of moving energy' and mentions the performance's ability to 'transform the most prosaic of settings into somewhere beautiful... as one hundred and ten runners weave intricate patterns with mesmeric results' (NVA, 2012). Here, he describes and defines the work purely in visual terms, on what an audience will see as opposed to the way that it will make them feel or the kinds of experience (beyond the visual) that they should hope to expect when they encounter the work. These signify an underlining contradiction in the artistic intent of the work, in that Farquhar seems to be at odds within himself when trying to identify the underlying value the work has. The dominant idea that Farquhar wants to promote is that NVA and *Speed of Light* produce more than patterns and shapes that are interesting to look at but consistently refers to its beauty and the kaleidoscope effect it has on the land as a constituting factor of the work.

COUNTER NARRATIVES

Farquhar also presents a personal commentary on NVA's work and on the locations in which they choose to locate it that is noticeably absent from the publicity materials created for *Speed of Light*. When the performance toured to Salford in Manchester it was commissioned by Quays Culture, an arts programme based at Quays/MediaCityUK, whose aim is to attract artistic talent to Greater Manchester (Quays Culture, 2016). NVA's official *Speed of Light* website²⁶ offers a description of the work and the relationship to its new site: 'hundreds of runners animated beautiful, choreographed patterns of light flowing through key parts of The Quays including canal banks, bridges and public spaces including The Lowry, the Imperial War Museum North, MediaCityUK and BBC North' (NVA, 2016). In this instance the qualitative judgment is reserved for the work itself which he describes as 'beautiful' whilst only offering a direct and neutral description

²⁶ A website set up with the purpose of promoting the *Speed of Light* suite of works as distinct from the NVA website itself which presents information about all the company's projects but in less detail than is available on the event specific website.

of where the work is situated. In *the Grim Runner* blog, however, Farquhar conveys a completely different relationship between the performance and site, and his relationship to them. He describes MediaCityUK as:

A soulless canal dockland regeneration scheme, a manufactured reality with every trace of the original industrial life airbrushed out of existence. The docks are surrounded by lifestyle apartment blocks, a factory outlet mall and pumped-up signature buildings. There are no kids, no real pubs or original restaurants, there is no greenery. It is just what Thatcher dreamed of when she said there was no such thing as “society.”

(Farquhar, 2016)

This quote focuses on Farquhar’s subjective perception of the place. *The Grim Runner* blog is accessible via the *Speed of Light* website and Farquhar offers a pathway to it via a link to it which people can access online. But it is perhaps unsurprising, given that much of what he thinks about the place is negative, that the blog post would not be immediately available in materials that attempt to draw in a local audience (and most likely people who live near and work in the surrounding areas that he is criticising). There is a striking contrast in description of the place/performance relationship between NVA’s *Speed of Light* website and *the Grim Runner* Blog. The website works to emphasise the positive elements of the work, its abilities to ‘communicate profound and often unarticulated ideas of how we live, who we are and how we are affected by our immediate environment’ (NVA, 2016). In contrast, the blog provides space for Farquhar to critique the particular part of Salford where the work was being staged. He criticises the funding bodies’ consistent desire to measure the value of live performance on the basis of its ability to bring economic growth or meet the particular criteria of policy driven initiatives ‘distorts the real meaning’ of the work and ‘rarely makes for better art’. He does however explain that these remits make artists better liars ‘as we manipulate and self-censor what we create to fit into an endless parade of funder outcomes’ (Farquhar, 2016). It is difficult to avoid questioning whether this is exactly what Farquhar has done with the Salford version

of the work. However, it is possible that *The Grim Runner* blog offers a context that allows an audience to read the performance as a counter narrative to the 'soulless' area in Salford. That, in some way, the performance is an attempt to redefine or reimagine the ways that people interact with the landscape there, that *Speed of Light* allows its audience to reimagine the area as something spectacular and dynamic. This is a stance that seems to be reinforced by Farquhar's desire to produce aesthetically interesting photographic documents of *Speed of Light*.

It is clear that throughout *The Grim Runner* Farquhar builds on themes of endurance, pain and memory to provide a series of supplementary and contrasting narratives to the *Speed of Light* project. These narratives, told through a series of miniature stories, help the audience to contextualise the performance work. Whilst the blog conveys valuable information about the origins of the piece and draws attention to various developments in the work, the central focus remains on the relationship Farquhar has with his body and, by proxy, the performance and landscapes that emerge from his running practice.

What is clear after analysing the documentation for *Speed of Light* is that NVA have employed a wide range of strategies which allow the company and Farquhar to present and make comment on the performance in many different ways. What is striking is that there is a kind of equilibrium manifest in NVA's documentary methodology which applies to the different modes of documentation. For example, the reservation shown in the officially sanctioned documentation was compensated for by the frankness of Farquhar's blog commentary. The images that were aesthetically rich and more evocative than explanatory were contrasted by contextual documents like press releases, descriptions and other promotional paraphernalia. The blog offered a detailed and personal description of the process of the work from the man who was the main creative force behind it. Although a secondary audience of the documentation would be able to gain a sense of the work from any individual component part within the portfolio of documentation, it is also true that

assimilating the materials and exploring them in relation to one another would provide an audience with a much clearer understanding of the work's nuances and contradictions.

SPEED OF LIGHT RUHR BOOK

I have analysed the documents from the primary platforms available to all secondary audiences of *Speed of Light*, such as those online on the NVA, *Speed of Light* and *The Grim Runner* websites. I have encountered documents – presumably in the manner the organisation intended – by following a series of links from one page to another, encountering images and written materials as they appear. However it may be useful to question whether the readings of the documents remain the same if they are presented in an entirely different context. For the German instalment of the work, NVA collaborated with the primary tourist board in the Ruhr – Ruhr Tourismus. As well as working together to produce a new iteration of *Speed of Light* with local choreographers and running participants, Ruhr Tourismus also collaborated on a *Speed of Light* print publication which comprised of selected documents from the performance and amalgamate them with tourist information about the Ruhr Landscape Park, where the performance was located.



(Figure 10. Front cover of the *Speed of Light Ruhr* book, Oberhausen, Ruhr Tourismus, 2013)

Looking at NVA's documentary methodology more broadly, the organisation has created other documentary books in the past depending on the project. Prior to the creation of the *Speed of Light Ruhr* book in 2013, NVA had published two other works with the support of their funding bodies.²⁷ Both the *The Storr: Unfolding Landscape* (2005) and *To Have and to Hold: The Future of a Contested Landscape* (2011) attempt to do something more than offer a detailed description of the performance and the process it took to make it. Previously, the purpose of the books was twofold: first, to provide space to include extra documentary material (images, descriptions, reflections, maps and designs) about a specific project which do not lend themselves to the neat and concise publicity materials included on the website. Secondly, they use books to connect their work with wider theoretical concerns; both the previous works include a variety of essays from academics across a number of disciplines.^{28,29} These books have carried out the dual purpose of presenting a more extensive collection of information and images about a particular project whilst also attempting to place the work within a wider – perhaps more critically centred – discussion about concerns relating to the particular locations they choose to perform in.

Farquhar states that the *Speed of Light Ruhr* book is 'the most comprehensive documentation of the work to date' (Farquhar, 2013). It displays a variety of photographs, infographs (visual representations of facts and data in the form of charts and/or graphs) and a number of maps that offer topological representations of the various walking routes in the work. The book provides more contextual information about *Speed of Light* in both German and English languages and what changes were made to the work during its development in the Ruhr. Although the book primarily focuses on giving more information about the performance, it also includes images and information about other tourist attractions to visit in the Ruhr such as the Erzbahnchwinge Bridge in Bochum and the Hansa coking plant³⁰ in Dortmund. It is evident that the

²⁷ Scottish Arts Council in 1995 and Creative Scotland/ Scottish Government in 2011

²⁸ Such as: Meg Bateman, Robert Macfarlane, Peter McCaughey, Seona Reid et al (2005)

²⁹ Such as: Jane Rendell, Edward Hollis, Hayen Lorimer, Emma Cocker et al (2011)

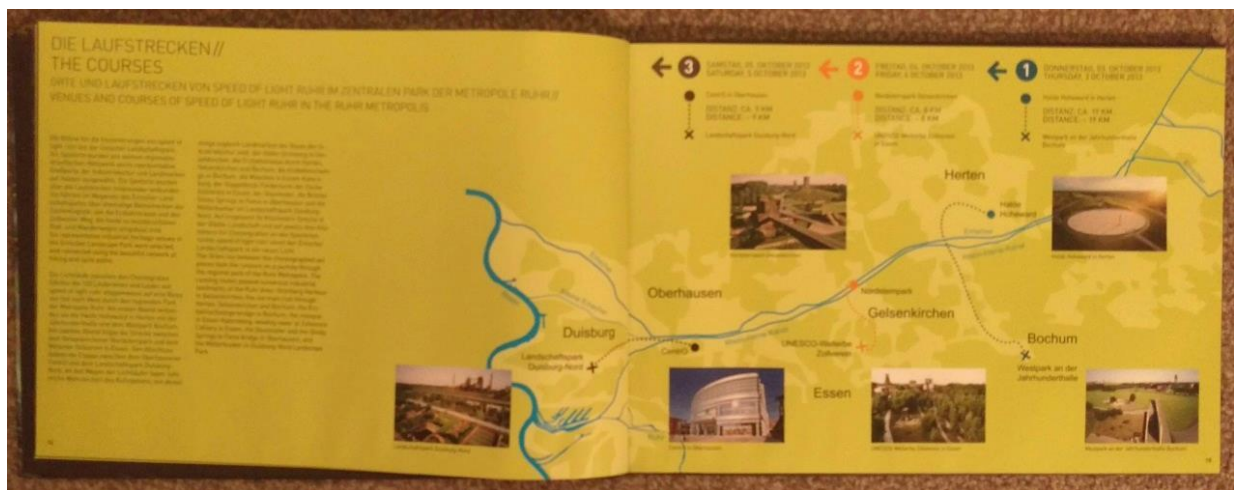
³⁰ Coke is a fuel which is usually made from coal.

book is not only an assembled and organised presentation of performance materials but is also a key marketing tool that enables the organisers to draw attention to the cultural significance of the Ruhr. Waterton argues that books and brochures 'remain the more visible – and instant – promotional tool, and are supplemented by both websites and guidebooks' (Staiff et al, 2013: p.71). Elaborating further she notes, 'At most destinations, the haphazard collection of brochures and related paraphernalia can generally be used to piece together an official sanctioning of what a heritage tourism site ought to "look like"' (ibid: p.64). It seems clear that documentation from the Ruhr version of *Speed of Light* was used in this way, assembled not solely for the purpose of promoting the performance but also to shape a particular idea of the Ruhr to promote the tourist industry there.

Speed of Light facilitated the production of images that could be used to aid the Ruhr tourist board in their attempts to promote the landscape park and establish a fresher brand of heritage tourism through new, visually distinct images and the book was one vehicle for disseminating this updated brand to a wider audience. *Speed of Light* was performed in specific sites of perceived (or promoted) cultural significance within the park. There is a sense that the performance was constructed within particular parameters set by Ruhr Tourismus, which funded the work. A key section of the book is split into three separate sections corresponding to the three separate stages of the work in the Ruhr.

There is a noticeable difference in the way the performance is described and presented in the book as opposed to the other platforms promoted by the organisation, like the websites and the blog. Descriptions of the runner's experience are replaced with more visually focused representations, such as a map, a selection of stock images of the main attractions within the Ruhr and graphics which seem to emulate the patterns of movement that is so apparent in McAteer's images. An example is a page that includes a map which marks out the particular route the runners

would be running, but all around the map are images of other sites of possible interest to tourists in that area.



(Figure 11. Pages 12-13 of the *Speed of Light Ruhr* book, Oberhausen, Ruhr Tourismus, 2013)

The Speed of Light Ruhr book focuses its attention far more on reasserting the accepted, officially sanctioned, highlights of the landscape park and drawing attention to already perceived ideas of its significance. The Ruhr book presents a mix of images and statistical information about the sites and why they are perceived to have cultural value. An example of this is in the description of the first stage of the work in Germany, which features a collection of McAteer's light trail images with the following caption describing the location:

First used in 1902 as an exhibition hall, in 1903 the Jahrhunderhalle was converted into a power station. A listed building since 1991, it is now a venue for many cultural, social and business events

(in Farquhar, 2013: p.42)

Ruhr Tourismus desired new images to help promote particular locations within the park but not at the expense of the social and historical significances they already identified and promoted. The sites chosen for the *Speed of Light* in the Ruhr are already popular for visitors and the tourist board had already framed their significances in a variety of ways (in information at the sites themselves and in the accompanying promotional materials). The book draws attention to particular

locations in the park and then highlights their perceived cultural significance. The exhibition hall that was converted to a power station and back to a hub of cultural events is a clear example. The 'official' presentations of heritage in the Ruhr still dominate and it seems clear that the tourist board would like McAteer's images to supplement those presentations rather than challenge them. *Speed of Light*, the performance and its documentation, offers the potential to re-write these uses and readings of the Ruhr Landscape Park but the work is framed in such a way by Ruhr Tourismus that it is always operating within narrow parameters. So, whilst Biermann – the Executive Director for Ruhr Tourismus – describes how one of the key motivations for commissioning the work was to 'generate new and impressive images of Emscher Landscape Park' (Biermann in Farquhar, 2013: p.10), he does so knowing that the predominant messages they want to convey will not be displaced by these new images, so long as they are continually framed and contextualised alongside materials conveying more conventional frameworks of heritage. The formation of the images – their ordering and captioning gives a greater insight into the thinking of the Ruhr tourist board than the live events. What is clear is that NVA's documentation is more than capable of being repositioned or reused to aid the promotion of their collaborator's products. The book evidences the potential for co-option and re-interpretation of documentation to tell stories and reinforce ideologies which were not necessarily intended by its creators. The meanings of the performance are malleable and can be bent to the desires of those commissioning the work. Perhaps that is why *Speed of Light* has had such success in so many different locations.

On the 1st of November, 2014 NVA's developing documentary methodology seemed to have gone through a final transformative stage as an event, dedicated to presenting three documentary films from the work in Yokohama, the Ruhr and Leeds, was presented to a live audience at the SWG3 studio workshop in Glasgow. This event marked the first time over a two year period that any of the accumulated documentation from *Speed of Light* was presented as artwork in its own right.

DOCUMENTARY EVENTS

Farquhar began collaborating with film-makers after the success of the performance in Edinburgh (and in particular after the positive response to McAteer's images), and he made it a priority to create a more detailed filmic documentation of the version in Yokohama. Certain artistic possibilities were brought to Farquhar's attention through a piece of unofficial documentation, a video posted by a Youtube user called 'thefunkatron' (2012), which was one of the few videos taken from an audience member's perspective. The video was taken from the top of Arthur's Seat looking down on the running participants. The entire performance was recorded and then edited to speed up the action and reduce the playing time to just less than two minutes. Farquhar included it on the NVA website after it was brought to his attention. The video did not create the same kinds of light-trails as McAteer's photographs in which the more stable components are fixed in that moment whilst the exposure captures the light as travels in the seconds after. Instead, the video recorded the runners as they performed their choreographies in real time, but by speeding up the filmed footage bodies of the walkers were replaced with a snake-like line of light. The effect did abstract the running experience in a similar way to McAteer's light trails but adapted for a film recording. Whatever else, the video opened up discussion about the artistic possibilities of filming and editing techniques, which led to the involvement of film makers as active agents in the creative process in later iterations of *Speed of Light*.

The first film was with Tokyo-based director Ayumi Sakamoto, and he experimented with overt mediation in the Yokohama film, such as the slowing down of certain sequences or the blurring of the light to make abstract cylindrical shapes. These interventions were brief and it was still possible to get the impression that the footage was serving to articulate the runners' movements (rather than producing an effect for its own aesthetic purposes). The film in Yokohama features many wide shots that take in a view of the performance within its broader topography as the frame includes buildings and passers-by. Enough contextual information is provided in the frame for us to

understand that the performance is happening in a city in Japan. Unlike McAteer's images, the video footage for the Yokohama film includes enough contextual material for us to understand that we are watching a video of a live event. This awareness marks the film as a document as opposed to an autonomous art object.

However, the artistic potential of the film-making really became apparent in the second film made in the Ruhr. Created by Alan McAteer, the footage builds on a similar aesthetic to his light trail images. McAteer layers different kinds of material in a split screen such as his still images which he puts alongside his video recordings and mediations. McAteer's film becomes an autonomous aesthetic object largely devoid of contextual indicators connecting it to the live event, making it difficult to distinguish that the performance is in the Ruhr. The film in the Ruhr is far more abstract than its Japanese predecessor because McAteer centres his attention on capturing movement and flow of lights as abstract forms rather than details of the topography or the buildings the work is situated in or around.

The final film was made by independent film-maker Mark Huskisson for the *Ghost Peloton* version of the work in Leeds. Huskisson's film is almost the antithesis of Sakamoto's as it did not present a clear representation of the event as it happened. Without the frame of reference of it being presented at an NVA event and without being preceded by the previous two short films and Farquhar's introduction, it would be very difficult to perceive that the footage stemmed from a live performance event. There is no way to discern what parts of the video were taken from the live event and what parts were made through collaboration between NVA and Phoenix dance in a studio space elsewhere in Leeds. Huskisson's artistic priority was to use the lights to create shapes and patterns of moving light. The landscape disappears completely as none of the presented footage gives its audience any information about where the work is located and the relationship between the performing bodies and the landscape they evoke through the work. It was this final film at the

event which garnered the most interest, perhaps because it was the most abstract or the one most open to radical interpretation.

CONCLUSIONS

Since its first iteration in 2012, NVA continually developed their documentary methodology for *Speed of Light* and arrived at the realisation that certain equipment and editing techniques had the potential to extend their creative practices beyond the live events to other forms of artistic expression. By the time *Speed of Light* reaches the Ruhr or evolves into *Ghost Peloton* in Leeds, the focus of the work moved away from a physical relationship enabled by a connection to landscape – so integral to Farquhar’s framing of *Speed of Light* on his *The Grim Runner* blog – in favour of an exploration into the various ways the light suits were able to generate dynamic shapes and patterns on film. When *Speed of Light* arrives in Glasgow two years after the project began, the documentation has morphed into the primary material for a live event itself. The entire process shows the creative potency of documentation and perhaps even dissolves the line between performance and documentation altogether. By the time we reach Mark Huskisson’s film it no longer makes sense to make such clear distinctions between live performance and documentation. The images and films take on a different kind of function, used to form a live event in their own right in a new environment with a new audience. *Speed of Light* could be described as a series of live performance events from which a number of creative documents were made, but it is more appropriate to describe *Speed of Light* as a suite of works which incorporate a variety of forms, across a range of media, offering no singular narrative or unified position on what landscape, performance or documentation is.

An analysis of the *Speed of Light* documentation has demonstrated a number of things about the company’s documentary strategy in practical terms. It is clear, for example, that NVA and Angus Farquhar employed a wide-ranging documentary methodology to account for the complexity of the work and the contradictory relationships it inspired. Different forms of documentation were used to

address specific needs. Photography, for example, was used in a variety of different ways to provide an account of the work and then market the concept for new locations. McAteer was afforded the freedom to produce images without the limitations of traditional documentary photography, in that they did not have to present a clear picture of what the work looked like for a participant or audience member. The result was the production of abstract light-trail images which offered visually striking (although not realistic) representations of the work and which also became one of the primary reasons why the project was commissioned in other locations. Photography, then, developed into a multifaceted aspect of NVA's documentary strategy, operating on a number of levels (aesthetic, representational, marketable). *The Grim Runner* blog, on the other hand, allowed Farquhar to frame *Speed of Light* within a more detailed autobiographical narrative. Farquhar used the blog to offer a commentary on the work that fell outside the officially sanctioned descriptions, often using it as a platform to present contradictory messages to those being disseminated in the press releases or other official documents. Whilst the promotional materials on the NVA website drew attention to the work as a 'visual spectacle,' Farquhar's blog presents a counter narrative which is much more focused on the body. In so doing, *the Grim Runner* undermines any unified or singular idea of what the work is or what its relationship to landscape might be. The blog afforded Farquhar the opportunity to frame in the work in his own terms, and in doing so undermined or challenged certain presentations of the work being promoted elsewhere. As the work evolved so did the company's documentary strategy as greater emphases was placed on certain forms of documentation to assume a more autonomous artistic role to the live events. This evolution reached its peak when documentation transcended its supplementary position to assume centre stage in a live event of its own, blurring clear distinctions between performance and documentation.

The *Speed of Light* documentation stimulated a broader discussion about the multiple ideas of landscape it produced. Whilst the work itself relied on phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape to be fully appreciated, what is clear from the analysis of its documentation is that there is no singular idea of landscape produced in any of their documents.

McAteer's light-trail images, with their evocation of movement, offered the closest visual representation of the landscape as a complex weave of experience, perception and sensation in *Speed of Light's* broad documentary methodology. They opened up the interpretative possibilities of landscape with a focus on the motion of the participating runners, the light-trails shifted focus from the details of the scene to the motion of the participants. The images focused less on what the landscape looks like and more on way the land is acted on, animated, and travelled through by the active agency of living bodies. Yet, such readings present a clear paradox, as soon as the argument is made for why these images constitute an experiential representation of landscape we are forced to consider what experiences are absent from the images, and what photographs - more generally - are unable to capture. Some of the most fundamental qualities of the performance and the landscapes it inspired were absent in the images, aspects such as the communication between moving bodies, the sense of physical difficulty, the challenge of navigating uneven terrain, or the impact of the weather on the runners' ability to perform the choreography. It seems that the images still negated those factors which give rise to the primary meanings of the landscape expounded by the performance.

The Grim Runner blog also allowed for an alternative framing of the performance and landscape. Whilst the official documentation promoted on the NVA website focused on the spectacle of the work and the locations in which it was situated, Farquhar's blog developed a counter narrative which put much more emphases on the ways that the land can test and push bodies to their limits. Through autobiographical (and often nostalgic) writings, readers of the blog learn about a far more complex relationship that Farquhar has with the land through a consistent running practice which he discusses in great detail. Descriptions of the impact of his running practice on his body present a landscape which is arrived at through action and experience rather than a spectacle viewed from afar. Whatever else, *the Grim Runner* blog disrupts any notion that *Speed of Light* as a project can be easily defined.

It is also true that whilst it may be NVA's intention for *Speed of Light* and its documentation to allow for a broader discussion of the body and landscape (as suggested throughout Farquhar's blog), it is clear that the work was often commissioned for its ability to generate representations that promoted some of the ideas of landscape that the organisation itself was attempting to disrupt. The book created after the Ruhr manifestation of *Speed of Light* which was made in collaboration with Ruhr Tourismus, demonstrating clearly how documentation can be utilised for commercial purposes as opposed to aesthetic or documentary as McAteer's images are assembled alongside more recognisable images of iconic sites in the Ruhr Landscape Park as a way of supporting and promoting more traditional representations of heritage. This certainly presents a challenge to NVA who are so aware of their ability to frame the work on their own terms and use the platforms available to do so. *The Speed of Light* Ruhr book demonstrates that representations of the work and landscape are often outside the strict control of those who are producing them.

This analysis of NVA's work demonstrates that their documentation establishes multiple audiences for the work. The growth and development of the project from Edinburgh to Yokohama, the Ruhr and Manchester; its developing portfolio of digital materials disseminated and shared on online platforms, and the final iteration of the work that presented the documentary materials in an event in its own right evidence the broad range of audiences that engaged with the *Speed of Light* in some form or another. This understanding of documentation having an audience of its own will be explored further in the following chapter on Simon Whitehead as his documentary strategy provides material that invites analytical engagement and a practical participation through the listening of audio tracks. NVA's is, undoubtedly, an artist-led approach to documenting as Farquhar takes a lot of care to guide an audience towards particular understandings of the performance through the documentation. That said, despite Farquhar's best efforts, what the analysis of the documentary materials demonstrated is the instability of representation and ways that documents seem to resist fixed meanings. On a practical level, this chapter has provided an in-depth insight into NVA's documentary approach and the implications that it has for understandings of landscape

performance. In particular, it has shown that landscape performances operate in a way that immerse participants (both audiences and runners) in the environment and call on them engage in a practical way with the land. The work happens in a relational context which provides opportunities for a multitude of interactions between people and place. The documentation of the work articulated the difficulties attached with attempting to provide fixed representations of the work as each approach was limited in its ability to reflect the diverse and ever changing nature of the relationship between people and place inspired by the work. Ultimately, *Speed of Light* helps articulate the idea that the meanings of landscapes are unfixed, in flux and contested, and its documentation adds to the confusion and helps them to resist fixed meanings. No form of documentation that NVA used offered a narrow or singular conception of the work or landscape, and the complex documentary methodology wove together a number of contrasting access points into the work.

Key Questions:

What strategies have been used to document Simon Whitehead's landscape performance work?

What ideas of landscape might be produced through the documentation of landscape performance works?

Can performance through its documentation help to articulate or extend our understanding of landscape?

CHAPTER 3

Simon Whitehead and Untitled States' Documentation

Simon Whitehead is a movement artist and choreographer whose artistic practice is to make 'ephemeral performance works that aim to reveal the shifting landscape of relationships to place, territory and belonging in an age of increasing mobility and change' (Theatre in Wales, 2006). Significantly influenced by his background in dance, his practice is phenomenologically-informed – in the sense that he has used Heidegger as a lens to contextualise his work (2012), and that his work is inspired by and is attentive to lived and bodily experience – and is predominantly made in relation to a specific place or emerges from a particular landscape. Whitehead often attempts to bring bodies, his own and others, into closer contact with the land both physically and perceptually in his work. He states: 'I have always been interested in finding ways of making the body more attuned and keyed in to where it is. The point was always for the participants to take this heightened, and hopefully more receptive, body back with them to their everyday environments' (Lavery and Whitehead, 2012: p.115). Whitehead's central thesis is that the body, through dance, can enable a person to move from a state of unfamiliarity or displacement in the land towards a more familiar or engaged relationship.

Simon Whitehead's work differs from the previous study in a number of ways. For one, the scale of the performance work he makes is more intimate and made for much smaller audience numbers than NVA's mass participation events. His approaches to documenting, too, are different. It

is clear that Angus Farquhar had a significant influence on the output of NVA's documentary strategy and the previous chapter described the ways that his personal attitudes and narratives shaped what kinds of documents were created and how they would be read. Whitehead has the same kind of control over his documentary output in terms of what is created and presented. However, this study reveals a range of strategies and materials which represent his landscape performance works in ways that do not place as much emphasis on his personal narrative and opinions. Whitehead is less interested in presenting personal motivations to contextualise the work, instead producing and framing materials in such a way as to invite interpretation and conjecture from their audience. There is also a difference in the role that documentation plays in marketing/publicising their work; Farquhar employs strategies with an desire to attract as many running participants and audience members to the work as possible and he collects materials on his website and uses them to sell the *Speed of Light* concept to arts organisations in different places around the world. Whitehead on the other hand uses his website as devising tool, as a place to collect and share material with his collaborators. Whitehead's work operates on a comparatively smaller scale to NVA which maybe accounts for the fact that he produces a smaller volume of material, presented in fewer platforms, to fewer people.

Whitehead's documentary approach has a number of similarities with NVA in terms of types of materials produced; he produces a lot of images and descriptions and other visual stimuli, and these are presented in the form of a book (as was the Ruhr iteration of *Speed of Light*). However, Whitehead also introduces a wider range of materials, including some modes which require a different kind of participation; a CD accompanies his book which includes a selection of soundscapes, which produce a different kind of audience for his work, an audience of listeners rather than walkers or spectators. Whitehead's sound recordings require audience members who engage with a temporary virtual performance. These require a quality of participation that has not been explored so far in this thesis. In the face of these alternative participatory documentary

methods, this case study continues to evidence the ways that documents can articulate different conceptions of landscape as well as investigating the contradictions inherent in the analytical frameworks employed. This study will explore how Simon Whitehead documents his solo and collaborative work and what implications these documentary materials have on our understandings of his work and the notions of landscape they produce. This study will draw attention to selected documents from Whitehead's *Walking to Work* (2006) book and explain how they were created, for what purpose, and what meanings can be extrapolated from them. It will also focus on the ways that Simon Whitehead's documentation has been organised and presented and will explore how the documentation has been mediated for particular purposes and effects. I will examine what the complexities of documenting Whitehead's work are as well as what relationships and functions the documents have. My hypothesis is that Whitehead adapts his documentary strategies to draw attention to particular relationships or engagements he has with the land that are often specific to and dependent on the nuances³¹ he explores in any particular work.

HEIDEGGERIAN HOMECOMING

In a written discussion with the artist entitled 'Bringing It All Back Home, Towards an Ecology of Place' in *Performance Research*, Carl Lavery discusses Heideggerian phenomenology in relation to the notion of homecoming and Whitehead's performance work. In essays such as 'Poetically Man Dwells' and 'Building Dwelling Thinking', Heidegger argues that to be situated in a particular place forms the basis of an 'authentic ontology' (Lavery, 2012: p.111), which he associates with dwelling and building:

The way in which you are and I am, the manner in which we humans *are* on the earth is *Buan*, dwelling. To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell.... Building in the sense of preserving and nurturing is not making anything ... genuine building, that is, dwelling.
(1997: p.101)

³¹ By nuances I mean the subtle findings and connections he uncovers during his work on/with the land.

For Heidegger dwelling means learning to be at home in place. Robert Mugerauer highlights that 'this homecoming is not just an initial coming or arriving at the place which may be home: it is a continuous becoming at home... This becoming at home would be *the persistent learning* to become at home' (2008: p.124 emphasis added). Homecoming, as it is described here, is a process in which a person is always participating in an ever evolving sense of understanding and connection to place. Lavery highlights the paradox in Heidegger's writing on dwelling, explaining that the theorist both positions homecoming as an unfinishable task, always in perpetual construction, that 'transcends any attempt to substantialise it in an ontic site or place' (ibid) whilst, at the same time, contradicting this expansive conception by equating home with an actual country, Germany. In other words, 'the progressive aspects of Heidegger's profound meditation on homecoming are negated when he transforms an ontological allegory about homecoming into a literalist and essentialist practice' (ibid).

Building on this discussion and reflecting on his own practice, Whitehead explores the possibility of appropriating Heidegger's insights about dwelling and homecoming whilst avoiding the difficult contradictions in his writing. He highlights that: 'one usually moves from a state of displacement in order to find home' and highlights the provocation which this kind of process of homecoming might offer, both conceptually and as an evocative and productive force in his own artistic practice:

As I see it, home... starts with the body. If we are to understand, fully, how the body can allow us to 'become' at home, then we have to find ways of preparing it, working with it so that we can be receptive to our surroundings. In a sense, then, the body is the 'first home', and the place or the territory where we live is a 'second home', or perhaps something that is made through our heightened sense of awareness to where we are. The 'third' home is the home you discover when you start interacting with the assemblage of body and environment to produce something new. For me, that's the creation of a dance piece.

(2012: p.114)

This quote reveals the driving force at the heart of all Whitehead's work: to provide space and facilitate situations that allow his audience to explore the process of becoming at home in their own bodies and in their immediate environments. The conception of the 'third' home as an interaction with the assemblage of body and environment seems particularly pertinent to Whitehead's work, as the production of 'something new' is exactly what he aims to achieve through this practice.

As an artist working in Abercych, a small rural community in west Wales, Whitehead has always been interested in how he can develop a creative practice that is rooted in and related to community and place. His performance works are a translation³² of his intimate relationship with the environments in which he works and he often attempts to communicate the kinds of connections and contradictions that emerge from his creative practice to his audience. Whitehead's performances offer his audience a structure in which to explore and interconnect with the land as they are invited to witness his personal relationship with landscape and gain their own through various participatory modalities: observing, listening, touching, moving, dancing, howling, lying, and/or stillness, amongst others. Whitehead also takes a considered approach to the documentation of his performances and he employs a variety of different strategies that also attempt to convey and explore relationships between body and place.

THE STAGES OF WHITEHEAD'S CREATIVE PRACTICE

Although his work is always connected in some way to place, it cannot be said that his work falls neatly into categories/descriptions. He began making work in 1992 as part of a live art collective called The Working Party in London. During this formative stage of his career he created a series of works for both studio and public spaces.³³ Following a period of further movement training and

³² Translation in that he seeks to convey some of the intimate and personal relationships that are often difficult to understand let alone convey or explain to other people. His translation is the process whereby he attempts to make his investigations and findings of place available and understandable for others.

³³ 'The Assignment Series' was presented at the Serpentine Gallery, ICA and Chisenhale Dance Space (1992-4).

performances in New York, he returned to Wales in 1994 where he has remained and continues to develop his practice. A consistent motivation for Whitehead has been an attempt to encourage audiences to (re)consider their relationship with landscape and environment, and over the last twenty years he has experimented with different performance modes and styles to do this. Despite the variety in his portfolio, works that contain walking and/or dancing as well as installations have remained his favoured modes of presentation. In 1996 Whitehead's work developed significantly through a collaborative partnership with sound artist Barnaby Oliver. Together, they have developed a number of live movement/sound works under the company name Untitled States. This creative partnership had to evolve in recent years when Oliver moved to Melbourne, Australia. They continue to experiment with performance, communicating the results of their research and collaborating despite the vast distance between them.

In a paper co-written with the artist, Carl Lavery tentatively outlines three key stages of Whitehead's practice, providing a useful framework from which to contextualise the progression of his work. I will describe these stages to foreground Whitehead's work before I move onto a detailed analysis of the artist's documentary strategies and materials. In the first period (1995–8), whilst he was living in the village of Clynnog Fawr on the Llyn Peninsula, Whitehead focused on developing solo and collaborative dance pieces with Oliver for Untitled States. During this period the duo set out to articulate their intimate relationship with landscape in performances like *Big Muff* (1995), *Salt/Halen* (1996) *Folcland* (1997) and *Skyclad* (1998). Whitehead explains that these works were all developed through a similar process which involved the artist collecting materials he found on his daily walks, including sound recordings taken on site which were assembled and mixed live by Oliver. For *Folcland* Whitehead gathered materials from the site (the sound of wind through an open gate, the trunk of a dead oak tree) and brought large rolls of newspaper into the space. He explains further:

The movement was a kind of obsessive tracing in and on the body and in space. I unrolled the paper and wrote and spoke an account of climbing a hill (I had a mic taped to my hand) from memory.... [T]he paper was subsequently formed into an impression of the uplands at sunset, and I carried a hand-held lamp to illuminate them in the 'West'. Barnaby used an array of guitar foot pedals to mix the sound.

(2012: p.115)

The word 'impression' reveals Whitehead's desire to express the landscape through his embodied relationship with it. It is a provocative word to use in this context because it can mean both an immediate perception of something but also a mark produced by pressure: a finger print at a police station leaves an impression that identifies the person the mark belongs to or a footprint in the sand or the marks left on wet cement. Whitehead conveyed his impression of the uplands (his immediate perception of that place gained through his experience of being there) and used the paper, like a fingerprint at a police station, to provide a physical mark that left some of his experience and ideas of place available for others to witness. This corresponds with the phenomenological and non-representational understandings of landscape discussed in the last chapter on *Speed of Light* and that I will return to later in this thesis. By sampling the sounds made by the land and by his interaction with it, Whitehead and Oliver were able to generate sounds that closely resembled Whitehead's experience – a sense of place with Whitehead in it. Whitehead uses recording equipment to collect samples of sounds in the places he works in (the sound of fence springs, running water, waves lapping on the shore, for example) and sounds he makes as he works (his voice, breath, and the noises his clothes make). These are sent to Oliver who uses other digital sound production software to mix these sounds into patterns and rhythms, sometimes adding additional sounds to the mix. These sound works compare with a movement called *Musique Concrète* pioneered by the composer and musician Pierre Schaeffer which feature compositions made up from sounds of musical instruments, voice, and sampled from the environment mixed with other sounds created using synthesizers and computer-based digital sound processing. Whitehead constructs the landscape of his experience by transmitting information generated from the site and

presenting layered materials – such as the paper or the sound recordings – to a live audience. The term ‘landscape of his experience’ refers to the idea of a sense of landscape emerging from a person’s relationship to it.³⁴ This idea is explored by Tim Ingold and carried forwards by non and more-than-representational theorists like Nigel Thrift and Hayden Lorimer. Whitehead’s description of *Folcland* provides a representative example of his and Oliver’s approach to working and draws attention to the triad of interests – performance, landscape, and documentation – evident in his work and that are central to this research.

In the second stage (2000–9), Lavery posits that Whitehead’s move from the Llŷn to the village of Abercych on the North Pembrokeshire–Ceredigion border resulted in an important shift in emphasis. With works like *Tableland* (1998), Whitehead’s mode of presentation becomes distinctively less introspective. For the performance, Whitehead took a table from his kitchen and underwent arduous journeys through the Llanaelhaearn uplands with the table carried on his back. He states that *Tableland* revealed his desire: ‘to make my work visible there and create dialogues both with the landscape and with people who encountered me’ (ibid: p.115). *Tableland* marked a significant development in Whitehead’s practice as it was the first time he consciously took his process into the public realm and the spontaneous encounters with locals became an integral aspect of the work itself. As Heike Roms attests: ‘The work shifted from a discrete performance practice to a daily practice to the labour of the audience itself’ (Roms, 2006: p.5). Before, in his earlier work, Whitehead would communicate his discrete practice to an audience in a controlled environment (a studio space or theatre, for example) through an integration of live dance and materials he had collected on site and developed with Oliver. In the second phase Whitehead exposes his practice for anyone to see and engage with. These spontaneous encounters with local strangers helped Whitehead form an understanding and appreciation of landscape through a process of collaboration with the people who lived, worked and – using Ingold’s terminology discussed in the introduction to

³⁴ The idea of place as ‘autotopographical – autobiography and topography – is discussed by Dee Heddon and referenced in the introduction to this thesis.

this thesis – 'dwelled there. Ingold, in a move away from Heidegger's understanding of what it is to 'dwell' on the earth, suggests instead that dwelling is 'literally, to be embarked upon a movement along a way of life.' For him it is not, as Heidegger suggests, to be in place, but to be along paths. The path, and not the place, is the primary condition of being – of becoming.

After *Tableland*, Whitehead's 'corporeal exploration of the landscape – his environment – was complemented with an increasing interest in social ecology, in examining how people make sense of and relate to their environments' (Lavery, 2012: p.116). This stage includes works like *Walks to Illuminate* (2006) at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, and *Burn* (2007) which was produced in Finland for the ANTI festival. These two examples best articulate this interest. In both performances Whitehead created a performance structure that aimed to challenge his audience to reconsider their relationship to the land. Here he actively involves his audience and invites them to produce their own investigations of landscape. For *Walks to Illuminate*, each audience member would light their own path through the Yorkshire Sculpture Park at night using specially developed light shoes. The shoes provided the only source of light for the audience to navigate their route through the park. The shoes were powered throughout the day by other walkers who wore hats with solar panels on them. *Walks to Illuminate* fits well with my conception of landscape performance, as the work created space for audiences to experience the sculpture park through an alternative kind of engagement than would usually be available at that location. As Whitehead highlights, 'walking in the dark may reshape and reinvent their experience of this landscape (and possibly of each other)' (untitled states, n.d.).



(Figure 12. Light-shoes for *Walks to Illuminate*, Yorkshire, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, 2006)

Whitehead began his piece *Burn* on the island of Vasikkasaari, a small fragment of land with an imposing windmill situated in the harbour. For two days, Whitehead collected passengers at the edge of the lake and transported them – via rowboat – to the island. Participants were invited to collect and carry sticks and pieces of wood as they went and, on the evening of the second day, a bonfire was lit from the offerings of the passengers. Before the fire was lit Whitehead gave his participants instructions which he hoped would allow them space within the performance to meditate on their relationship with the land. He asked the participants to lie down on a large rock and gaze into the sky. This was a simple change but effective in the way it invited the audience to consider their physical relationship to the land and how their perceptions of the land shifted dependent on its relation to their bodies. Whitehead's hope was that in this moment of stillness and reflection, the audience would emerge with a heightened awareness and appreciation of their landscape.

In the third phase (from 2009 onwards), Whitehead and his partner, the dancer Stirling Steward, have hosted a series of artist residencies in 2 Penrhiw Cottage in Abercych where Whitehead also lives in the house next door with his family. During these residencies invited artists are asked to reflect on the village of Abercych and create work in response to their investigations. For Whitehead and Steward the aim is to highlight other potential understandings of place when it is experienced and explored by new visitors. The residencies encourage dialogue between local inhabitants and visiting artists who – by using their outsider status – can offer and encourage debate and bring to light new ideas in their work. Whitehead and Steward do not set any standards or give any rules or structure to the types of work created by the visiting artists. They are instead more interested in attempting to facilitate an environment of experimentation conducive to fresh discussion.

Even as his work and working methods have evolved, Whitehead's performances always seek to encourage participation with the landscape and to produce a heightened awareness of our placed-ness in it. Whitehead's background in dance and movement remains central to all the work he makes; his improvisations in/with places forms a basis for his work, and this is then shared directly (in the context of a live event), or indirectly (through documentation) with his audience.

This chapter will look broadly at the different methods employed by Simon Whitehead to document his landscape performance works. It will look at the two primary platforms he has used to disseminate his documentation. In particular, I will focus on a book of collected documentary materials entitled *Walking to Work* (2006) and the Untitled States website in which he archives a mixture of documentation from past and more recent performances. Rather than focusing on a single performance work (as the previous chapter did for NVA's *Speed of Light*) this chapter will draw on a few selected performances in its analysis of Whitehead's documentary strategies and materials. The performances this study will focus on are selected from a varied portfolio which envelopes the broad range of forms the artist engages with.

WHITEHEAD'S DOCUMENTARY STRATEGY

Whitehead uses a number of different documentary methods to represent his work. He produces photographs, drawings, written descriptions, and digital sound recordings to articulate differing aspects of his work's ongoing relationship with place. His documentary strategy is consistent so the different methods he uses stay the same even as the form and focus of his work develops and changes. I am especially interested in investigating the different aspects of his documentary strategy – photographs, drawings and audio recordings – all of which demonstrate potential to address some of the prevailing difficulties that arise when trying to generate representations of performance and landscape, in particular that documents can often reduce or constrain the multiple ways that people engage with the landscape into a singular fixity. Broadly, Whitehead's strategy involves a number of different collected or constructed materials which opens up the performance, his practice, and the landscape for interpretation.

Pearson and Shank's 2001 book *Theatre/Archaeology* provides a language that helps to contextualise Whitehead's documentary strategy and whilst the artist is not particularly concerned with the archaeological project in his own work (either on a theoretical or practical level) Pearson and Shanks still offer direction for how to approach Whitehead's documentation analytically. In *Theatre/Archaeology* the authors state that both performance and archaeology 'negotiate identities, of people and things.' (2001: p.54). They offer the term 'assemblage' which is a useful concept for understanding materials and how they are organised and reconceptualised to generate new meanings. The term assemblage binds the two disciplines together: both use the term to signify the creation of meaning by working with fragment and trace. Performance and in particular devised work:

results from the identification, selection and accumulation of concepts, actions, texts, places and things which are composed and orchestrated in space and time according to a set of governing aesthetics ideologies, techniques and technologies
(2001: p.55)

Archaeology forges a sense of the past from the exploration and interpretation of fragments in the forms of images, diagrams, inventories, collections, reports and writings – similar to the task of a person addressing performance documentation. Assemblages are inevitably partial because they require acts of interpretation and the possibilities of how they might be interpreted are endless, they are fragmented and incomplete constellations of material which evoke multiple interpretations of and interactions with a performance. Whitehead's work might best be described as an act of assemblage – as it usually involves a 'selection and accumulation of concepts, actions, texts, places and things' (Pearson and Shanks, 2001: p.55). Interpretive acts of assemblage can be applied to Whitehead's documentary materials in order that we might form ideas about his work and the ideas it espouses. Many of his performances, as I have discussed, involve a participatory element on behalf of the audience who are often invited to interact with the artist and with the places he selects to work. The live event is only one way in which Whitehead attempts to produce a landscape experience. However, even acknowledging the difficulty that documentation is always a representation of *something*, there are aspects of Whitehead's documentary strategy (parts that make up the assemblage) that invite the possibility that his documents move beyond representation and attempt to embody an experience of the work.

The *Walking to Work* book is a comprehensive collection and presentation of documents from Whitehead's work from 1993 - 2006. There does not seem to be a development of Whitehead's documentary practice over time as he is consistent in the methods he employs. This is apparent in the fact that *Birnam* (made in 1993) and *Walks to Illuminate* (made in 2006) are documented using the same strategies and are both presented in the same fashion within the book. It is also clear that despite his collaboration with multiple photographers,³⁵ the range of shots that are taken of his work (in terms of form, style and subject) centre on a core set of principles from which he does not deviate – I elaborate on these in detail later in this chapter. There is considered direction given

³⁵ Colleen Bartley, Peter Bodenham, Guy Briller, Steffan Caddick, Lorraine Gilbert, Sioned Huws, et al (full list available in *Walking to Work* (2006) p.88.

about the kinds of photographs he wants the photographer to produce. His use of drawings, as documentation for his performances, is also consistent in style. All of these have been made with a pen of thin-line and black or blue ink. The descriptions of his works do not fluctuate in size much and all are presented in the same informal style. The consistency in the way that the documentation of his works are made and presented suggests that he is specific about his methods and the manner in which he uses them.

Whitehead's documentation works against a line of argument that positions documentation as subsidiary to the live performance event discussed in the introduction to this thesis. He does not understand documentation as an optional extra or something created as an afterthought to the live event.³⁶ He understands documentation as an alternative way of experiencing landscape and his work. Not simply *representing* the experience but providing a different and, perhaps, equally important experience. In this sense, documentation is not subsidiary but integral to his overarching creative practice. Again Pearson and Shanks' *Theatre/Archaeology* offers a framework for analysing this further. Shanks states that when we give intensive attention to traces in the land and earth, 'the complex articulations of history and place, the milieu of human inhabitation. Walking, observing, scraping, digging, noting, mapping' (2001: p.39), landscape becomes a useful concept which brings together ideas on culture *and* nature, time *and* space, and the past as traces in the present:

Memories live on with us, as do found things and photographs,
and as we reinterpret memories and incorporate them into
new stories of our life, so photographs, archaeological sites
and artefacts change.

(2001: p.42)

This is past represented, in its remains, by the archaeologist who is an accredited figure of the archaeological community charged with the responsibility of undertaking this task without

³⁶ The history and merit of ideas surrounding perceived hierarchies of performance materials have been discussed in Philip Auslander (2008) and Mathew Reason (2006) and are discussed in more detail in my introduction.

his/her own avoidable bias or the bias(s) of their department or institution in which they work. To this end:

The object of documentation then is to devise models for the recontextualisation of performance text as second-order performance, as a creative process in the present and not as a speculation of past meaning or intention

(ibid, p.59)

The key point is that there is no definitive originary meaning, since the 'original' performance event will itself have been fragmented, and experienced in multiple different ways. Much of Whitehead's documentation reinforces the structure which positions documentation as subservient to the live event in that much of what is encountered in *Walking to Work* is referencing an event which happened in some other place and time. The documents are understood as mechanisms of understanding something else (some other live event), as opposed to inviting interpretation for their own sake. However, there are a number of documents which shift the focus towards a different kind of relationship, one which suggests that documentation can be more than a representation and are instead an alternative and, perhaps, equally important way of experiencing landscape and his work.



(Figure 13. Pages 40-41 of *Walking to Work*, Simon Whitehead, Abercych, 2006; photos: Keith Morris, Heike Roms and Simon Whitehead)

I will use the documentation for *Source to Sea* (2000) to illustrate some of these ideas further. *Source to Sea* was developed as one of the Centre for Performance Research's Mapping Wales projects which 'paired artists from within Wales with those from without for a series of performative excursions into the Welsh landscape' (Roms, 2006: p.10). In the first instance, the project brought Whitehead together with Rachel Rosenthal, a performance artist from Los Angeles. Together, they would create a 'counter-map' of their journey that was 'both sensual and discursive' (ibid, p.11). Kate Noonan and Heike Roms accompanied the pair as documenters of their excursion. Together they traced the river Ystwyth³⁷ from its source to estuary by walking along its course over four days, from the 10th to the 13th of October, 2000. On their way to the estuary in Aberystwyth, they travelled through the sheep covered hills of the uplands, landscaped paths in the woodlands of a large estate, and the farmland in the lowlands. As the pair walked they shared accounts of their recent traumatic experiences: Rosenthal had an operation on her knee and Whitehead's grandmother had recently passed away. At points on their journey they stopped and kneeled down, they felt the grass and they took the time to sit at the foot of some trees. At particular moments they picked up objects on the trail, Whitehead picked up berries which he later used to make jelly. As they went: 'Rosenthal and Whitehead collected drawings, writings, sound recordings, soil samples and organic and inorganic objects such as flowers and stones' (ibid, p.10). When they reached the mouth of the Ystwyth the pair embraced, an act of significance as it signalled the end of Rosenthal's performance career - *Source to Sea*, she decided, was to be her last performance work.

In the days following their journey, Whitehead and Rosenthal explored ways that they might account for their journey. The pair used the materials they had collected to present a 'performative map' to an audience at the Aberystwyth Arts Centre and, 'a model of the Ystwyth was gradually assembled from the gathered objects, accompanied by narratives of the trip' (ibid, p.11). The live event explored the performers' journey through a mixture of personal testimony and a sharing of

³⁷ The Ystwyth (Welsh: Afon Ystwyth) is a river in the county of Ceredigion, Wales. The length of the main river is 33 km (20.5 miles).

their collected objects taken from their route. The audience were invited to taste Whitehead's jelly while the artists' re-enacted embrace marks the end of the performance just as it marked the end of their journey.

There was a second journey on the 31st of October that was taken by Whitehead, accompanied by Roms, after Rosenthal had returned to the United States. On this second journey Whitehead took the objects that had been gathered during the initial excursion back to the locations from which they were originally taken (or as close to those locations as possible³⁸). Six months later, there was a third journey on the 25th of April, 2001. This time, Whitehead and Roms returned to the river after the Centre for Performance Research asked them to create a record of the journey for publication. As Roms states, 'the challenge now was to translate a three-dimensional, embodied and ephemeral performance map back into the flat, diagrammatic and a-temporal surface of the page' (ibid, p.12). For help in this task, Whitehead invited his longstanding Untitled States collaborator, Barnaby Oliver, to contribute. Oliver layered text and imagery from the drawings and writings from the initial journey on sheets of paper that Whitehead would place in the water at various points along the route allowing the water and seaweed to alter the pages.

To document *Source to Sea* in his book, Whitehead uses a mixture of images that were taken by Roms to document the four-day excursion and the subsequent returns to the Ystwyth, selected images of the performative map in the Aberystwyth Arts Centre by Keith Morris and some scans of the materials made by Barnaby Oliver after Whitehead had taken them out on the route. He arranged these materials alongside short descriptions and associated quotes. On this page, as with all the others in *Walking to Work*, he is selective and specific with the amount of documentation he uses, often choosing a few elements that present a flavour of the performance without offering any explicit detail as to how the work would have looked to an audience. The individual components on the page are varied as there are written descriptions, drawings and images. There is no information

³⁸ A particularly rainy summer in Wales caused the Ystwyth to break its banks rendering it impossible to return to some of the exact spots they had originally visited.

which helps to contextualise the images; it is not clear at what point they were taken and to what exactly they refer. This broad collection of documentation gives a sense that Whitehead is more concerned to draw attention to moments of engagement in his environment rather than trying to present his materials in a linear format in an attempt to show the action as it unfolded chronologically. Whitehead is careful in this strategy to avoid presenting documents in such a way that suggests there is a single timeline, viewpoint or experience of this work or the landscape that emerged from it. The documentation often hones in on the specifics of the location – its particular details, textures, terrains – and presents these in a way that separates them from any other relatable context: a close-up of grass or a close-up of the pebbles, for example. By focusing on representing the specific details of the land and his engagement in/with it, as opposed to providing an explicit or detailed chronology of his actions, Whitehead opens up a discussion about his strategies for avoiding fixity (of the performance and landscape) and the documentation's ability to promote a more open interpretation of his work and the landscape.

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

A broader analysis of the *Walking to Work* documentation shows that Simon Whitehead puts images at the centre of his strategy. This is clearly demonstrated in the way he returns to photographic documentation for each of his works featuring these consistently on every page. There are three primary styles of photographic documentation utilised across Whitehead's work, all of which are exemplified on the pages about *Source to Sea*. The styles can be categorised as: shots of the locations of his performance processes taken in 'macro' or 'close-up', wherein a certain feature or part of the subject takes up the whole frame; shots of the performers interacting with the land, all of which are taken from 'mid shot' which shows some part of the subject in more detail while still giving an impression of the whole subject; and finally, shots of the audience/performer configuration in the moment of performance, all of which are taken as 'very wide shots' wherein the subject is visible in the frame and emphasis is given to the place in which the subject is positioned. This is a

formal structure which matches the subject matter to the range of shot taken. As was demonstrated in the first chapter through a discussion of tourism images, photographic representations of performance often reduce or fix the work and the landscape, and struggle to represent the variety of aspects that constitute landscape performances. To unsettle this, Whitehead takes different kinds of images from different stages of the work and collates and presents them in a way that appears random to an audience. The sizes of the images, as they are presented on the page, remain consistently small but for a few exceptions. This also aids the unsettling of fixity because although the images may be taken by equipment with the capacity to record representations of the land and the bodies in it in great detail, the size of the images on the page makes such details more difficult to assess and understand.

THE CLOSE UP

An analysis of Whitehead's close-up photographic documentation provides a useful site to explore what ideas of landscape are produced and whether these images can articulate or extend our understanding of landscape. Whitehead invites his collaborating photographer or photographers (in the case of *Source to Sea*, Heike Roms, Keith Morris, and Barnaby Oliver were all invited to take photographs at different stages of the work and it is not made clear within the book who was responsible for photographing what) to take close-up shots of things that he sees or interacts with as he explores the land through his practice which may involve: walking, dancing, touching, sitting and observing amongst others. As he explores the land, Whitehead identifies a number of elements or details that he chooses to engage with. At some point during this interaction the photographer is invited to take a picture of these details. Whitehead's close up images show elements of the terrain or inanimate objects on the land. In most photographs there is evidence of some kind of human interaction.



(Figure 14. Images from page 41 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, photos: Heike Roms, 2006)

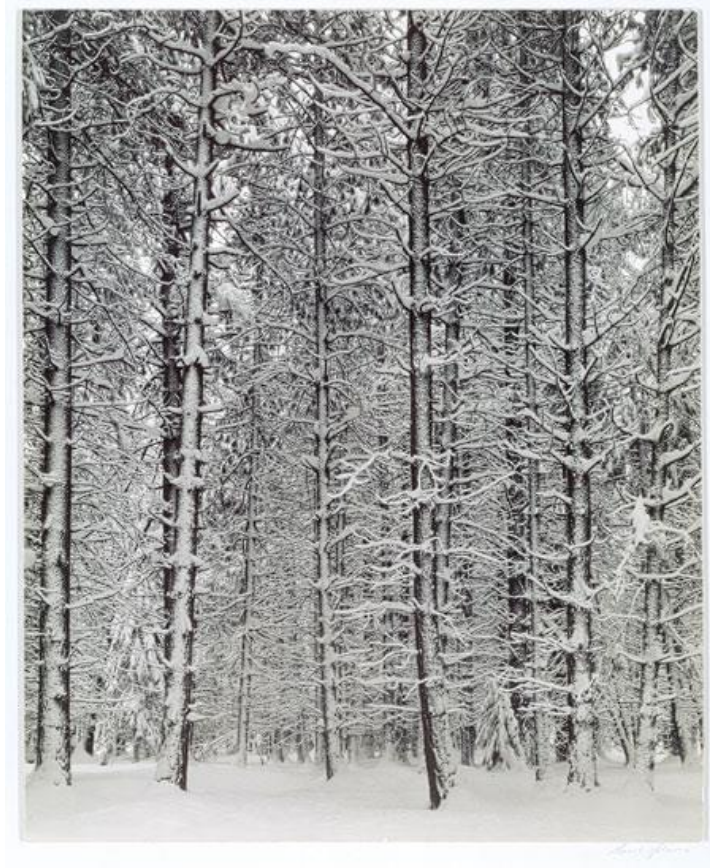
In the two outer images above, for example, we see objects that have been transported there by someone (it is often not clear whether the artist is that someone or not). It is possible to understand, however, that the foam blocks in the water in the image on the far left were put there by Whitehead through other contextual material written on the same page of the book. The two images in the centre also give an impression of human interaction; the picture on the left shows the shadow of the photographer and the picture on the right seems to show a divot left by torn up grass, now with a smaller patch of grass placed back on top. There is a perceptible sign of human action in all these photographs but this is shown in an indirect way. The focus of these images is not on the body of the person acting on the land or that action as it is happening. Rather, it focuses the attention of its audience on the effect that person has had on the land, the changes that have been made as a result of them being there or the effect they are having on the land at the particular moment when the picture is taken. The fact that all the images are taken as close ups has, from my own subjective perspective, a certain symbolic significance: they invite the viewer to pay greater attention to the effects bodies have on the land when they use or interact with it. The close-ups are representative of the attention Whitehead gives to the land throughout his process, an awareness of the effect he, those around him (and the audience by extension) have on the environment. Although the body itself is absent in these images, they still evoke the interconnectedness of people and places.

The detail of Whitehead's close up images connects them to the photography of the f/64 group. F/64 was a group of photographers, which included prominent members such as Edward Weston and Ansel Adams, who produced images of the land using the smallest apertures on large format cameras for maximum sharpness and detail. The group thought it necessary to strip away any manipulation of an image in the production of the corporal photograph. It was their belief that the camera was able to 'see' the world more clearly than the human eye. This was not only because the lens technology allowed the subject to be brought into sharper focus or enlarged to see elements more clearly but the group also thought that a camera could not project personal prejudices onto the subject. This idea is disputed on the grounds that the decision of what to shoot is still subject to personal prejudices and preferences.

The group produced images that are topographic in subject matter in that they present their audience with a broad view of the surface details of the land as it stretches out towards the horizon. Notably the land in these photographs is unpopulated by people or animals which presents the landscape as a wilderness and reinforces the romantic perspective of the land as pristine and unspoiled. Adams focuses his practice on the clarity and detail of his photographs and the desire to bring the surface shape and features of two selected locations into sharp focus.

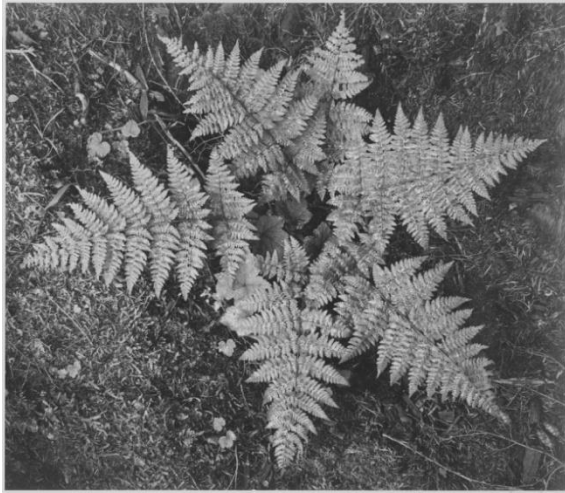


(Figure 15. Dunes, Oceano, California, Ansel Adams, 1963)



(Figure 16. Trees and Snow, Yosemite Valley, California, Ansel Adams, 1933)

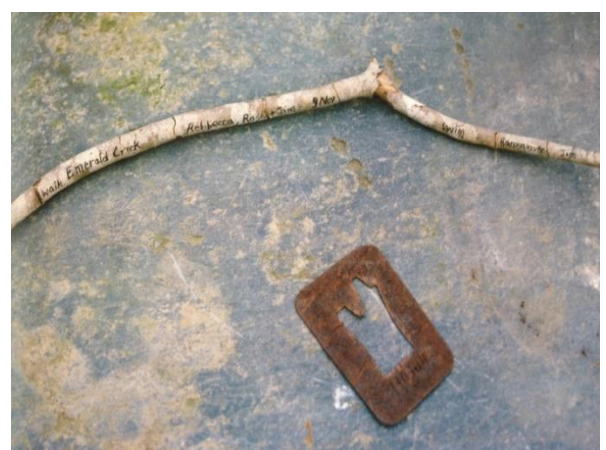
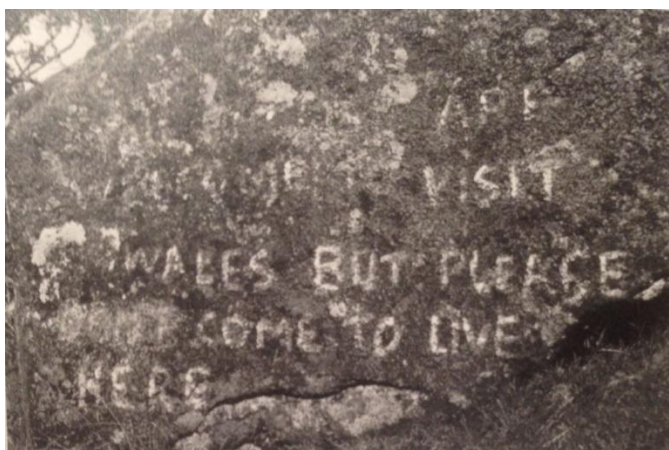
Group f/64 created an idea of 'pure' photography which presented features they discovered in the various environments they visited or inhabited. These subjects highlighted the photographer's creative intuition and ability to create: 'aesthetic order out of nature's chaos' (Naef, 1978). The scale of the image affects an audience's interpretation and shapes how the image is understood: the camera being closer to the subject produces a different kind of landscape or asks different kinds of questions of the landscape than those that are taken at a distance. Close up images such as Adams' *Mt. McKinley in the Rose Berry* (1941) and *Icicles* (1965) inspire different responses to landscape than the images that feature wide angles. The first set of images produce a spectacular expansive view of the land whereas the latter produces a more intimate relationship, symbolic of getting-closer-to nature as opposed to creating distance between the viewer and the subject.



(Left, Figure 17. Close-up of ferns, Glacier National Park, Montana, Ansel Adams, circa 1941)

(Right, Figure 18. Icicles, Yosemite National Park, California, Ansel Adams, 1935)

The close-up images express Whitehead's desire to develop intimate and physical relationships with the land and the process through which he is trying to achieve that intimacy. It is possible to imagine Whitehead from these images, as he practises his art on location, moving through and interacting with the land. Throughout his practice for *Source to Sea*, Whitehead undertook the work of exploring and finding through the actions of searching, walking, kneeling, and touching. He then presented his findings; first, at an event in front of a live audience and then again through the photographs in his *Walking to Work* book.



(Figure 19. Writing on rock on p.16 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; photo: Simon Whitehead)

(Right, Figure 20. Writing on stick on p.75 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; photo: Simon Whitehead)

Proxemics³⁹ plays an important role in shaping an audience's interpretation of these images and Whitehead's work. In order to create the vast panoramic shots akin to the predominant modes of landscape photography, the photographer has to be positioned a great distance away from the subject and therefore, arguably, presents a sense of detachment with the land. What Whitehead's close-up images do, as some of Ansel's before him, is bring the viewer closer to the land. In many of Whitehead's photographs, the audience gets a view which is closer to the land than would have been expected if they were standing looking at it as part of the live event. The images draw attention to Whitehead's exploration of the textures and surfaces of the land and they help to produce a more intimate, interactive, understanding of landscape; but further to that, the close-up images act as prompt for past and future embodied performances. Rather than understanding the photograph as an object to be understood on purely visual terms, Whitehead's images bring the haptic into play and signal the performative aspect of the landscape experience that moves beyond only the viewing of it.

HAPTIC VISUALITY

As a critical frame to help contextualise this interpretation, the images can be viewed as part of visual culture using what Laura Marks has coined in *The Skin of the Film* (2000) as haptic visuality – a way of understanding the tactile in what we see. Haptic visuality, to put it simply, is a way of *seeing* an image through multiple senses. The concept provides a useful framework to reconsider Whitehead's close-up images as sensory experience. Marks forms her central thesis on haptic images through a discussion of selected examples of intercultural cinema – for example *Seeing is Believing* (1991), a video made by Shauna Beharry – in which the sense of touch is significantly represented by the cameras focus on the folds of the sari worn by the filmmakers long lost mother. Marks offers a theoretical reconsideration of mimesis as a means of evoking the non-visual sensation of touch in the visual medium of cinema. Drawing on Deleuze (amongst other theorists), Marks argues for

³⁹ Proxemics codes are those which make meaning out of space.

mimesis as a mode of creation that offers 'a form of yielding to one's environment, rather than dominating it, and thus offers a radical alternative to the controlling distance from the environment so well served by vision' (Marks, 2000: p.140). In other words, Marks invites us to move away from thinking about watching film on purely visual terms and, instead, wants us to consider the impact that viewing experience can have on the whole body, to consider how film provokes feelings as well as cognitive responses.

Marks' differentiates between haptic perception and visibility. Haptic perception combines the tactile, kinaesthetic and proprioceptive⁴⁰ functions as a way a human can experience both in and outside the body, whereas haptic visibility combines perception and vision as a way of using the eyes as instruments of touch (Marks, 2000: p.162). This approach integrates visual images within our own embodied experience so that the visual can also become tactile (subjective and close) instead of remaining solely optical (objective and distant). That is, the viewer 'can feel the visual image as though it were a part of him/her, contained within as a visceral experience' (Gladwin, 2013: p.160). Haptic visibility also functions as a type of 'interactive media' where the viewer or spectator develops a relationship with the object or referent being viewed through close and personal interaction. In 'Of Skins and Screens: Hyperdance, Haptic Cinema, and Contact Improvisation,' Harmony Bench acutely describes this process through back and forth comparison:

An optical image invites viewers to stand back and take in grandiose scenes, while haptic images require closer inspection. Haptic images are textured, at the surface, and dispersed over the screen or canvas. Optical images simulate three dimensional space in their perspectival depictions – they have depth, they have a ground – whereas haptic images follow a two dimensional, planar logic – layer upon layer. Optical vision is objective, distant – a form of seeing that extricates it the seen, a surveying sight. Optical images invite viewers' mastery over the image. Haptic images undermine that mastery.

(Bench: 2006)

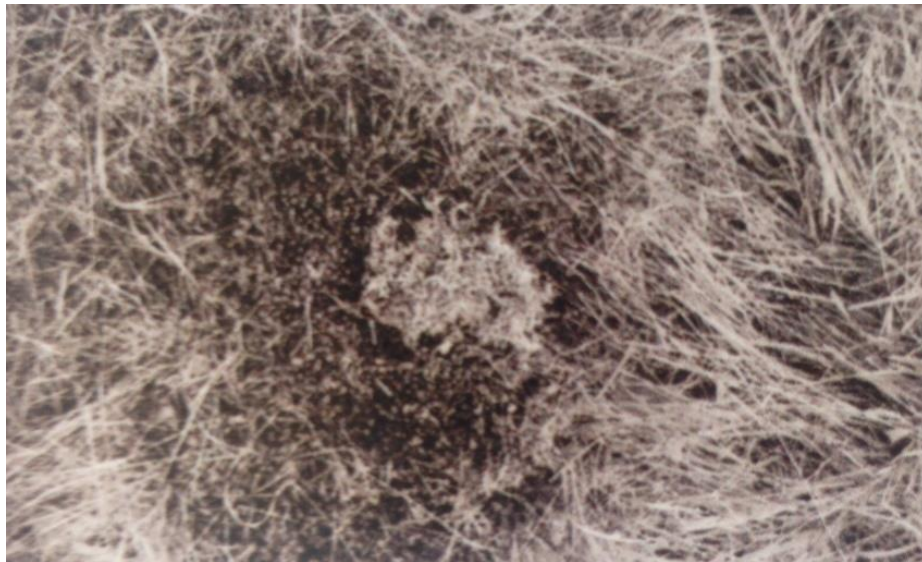
⁴⁰ Proprioceptive: pertaining to the sensations of body movements and awareness of posture, enabling the body to orient itself in space without visual clues.

Understanding film (and photographs) as tactile representation is valuable because it allows us to better understand the relationship between viewer and object and how they become entwined in physical experience and highlighted through a focus on the sensations that the work can provoke. Following the work of Marks, other film theorists have also drawn on phenomenological understandings of embodiment to argue for a greater emphasis in film criticism to be placed on the bodily sensation of spectatorship. Vivian Sobchack, for example, argues that 'we do not see any movie only through our eyes'; rather, we 'feel films with our whole bodily being' (2004, p.63). Elizabeth Stephens also highlights that 'where cinema's potential to provoke intense physical reactions may once have taken audiences by surprise, it is now an important part of what contemporary film-goers actively seek out in their experiences of cinema' (2012: p.529). In other words, it no longer makes sense to critique films from a solely intellectual cognitive response; we also have to think about how films can produce other physical/ sensorial responses: it is not only what the object makes you think but how it makes you feel and how those feelings evoke emotional and intellectual responses.

It is important to point out that photography can be viewed as part of the same visual culture as film, as Derek Gladwin highlights when he states: 'Cinema is often considered a relative of photography in visual culture and while photography distinctly separates itself from cinema, the notion of visual touch can be applied to both mediums' (2013: p.160). So, although this description on haptic visuality has focused on the work of film theorists in particular, the ideas explored can be applied to the photographic medium. Further, I argue that by considering the embodiment of the viewing experience of a photograph – by using haptic observation, or seeing, tactically – the viewer can identify and connect with the natural world on a greater level, and this is what some of Simon Whitehead's photographic documentations enable.

Many of Whitehead's images are well suited for visually haptic interpretations due to their dynamic texturing and depth. Rather than filling the foreground of his images with people or animals

and risk adding to the dominant representations of place that often show commonly understood actions familiar to those places (farmers farming the land, for example), Whitehead's close-up images instead focus in on particular details of the land. Using haptic visuality as a mode of viewing Whitehead's images, we can picture the world in close proximity, as though it could be touched. Indeed, the images themselves present the land not as a romantic untouched wilderness which has been a prominent subject for landscape photography (as is evident with the prominent f/64 group), but instead show the effect of human interaction on the land. We gain a sense of touch by viewing what has been touched. This builds on the idea of 'haptic visual', which suggests touch through emphasis on surface and texture, rather than showing the impact/impression of touch on a material.



(Figure 21. Rough grass on p.41 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; photo: Heike Roms)

If we take this image which shows the spot where Whitehead had lain on the grass as an example, a sense of touch is evoked through the contrast in texture between the grass which has been lain on and that which has been left untouched by the artist. Through the photograph we get an impression (both literally and figuratively!) of how our interaction shapes the land which as we interact with it, how our physicality affects the physicality of the surface. The flattened darker patch of grass presents a smoother and flatter surface than the long wild strokes of the unaffected roots. This presentation counters the version of untouched nature that exists in traditional landscape

photography. It can also be argued that these images lend themselves towards non or more-than-representational reading. According to Thrift (1996, 1997, 2000), the non-representational project is concerned with describing landscape practices: 'mundane everyday practices that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves in particular sites' (1997: p.142). This is inspired by an advancement of the phenomenological perspectives as described by Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Ingold and is widely recognised as a significant development of the phenomenological perspective within the study of landscapes. Non-representational theory is not a singular thing, rather it is, as Hayden Lorimer notes, 'an umbrella term for diverse work that seeks better to cope with our self-evidently more-than-human, more-than-textual, multisensual worlds' (2005, p.83). Non-representational theory, or 'more-than-representational theory', Lorimer's (2005) alternative phrasing, attempts to generate new approaches without applying the dualisms present in the previous visually-centred approaches to landscape study. The theory is thus an umbrella term for those seeking to investigate representation *and* practice, body *and* society, culture *and* nature, thought *and* action by focusing on the embodied processes of landscape experience.

Whitehead is concerned with process and his images reflect the action and interaction that the artist himself was conducting. What seems clear, then, is that the proxemic relationship between the distance of the camera and the details of landscape shown has an impact on how we read the images and our understanding of the landscape/ performance. The closeness of the land helps to articulate the idea that a landscape is not only something that we see and perceive as we move through it, but something that we are intimately involved with through our actions. Our relationship with it is built through the intimate relationships that texture our movement and interaction. The detail of the different textures and surfaces of the land enable us to imagine, and perhaps even inspire, a physical relationship which is predicated on touch. This is a more complex understanding of and presentation of landscape that moves away from the land as a fixed image towards a series of fragments, an assemblage, which allows us to imagine an embodied relationship. It is important to note here, though, that the available fragments are limited in what they might produce by way of

interpretation or inspiration for *Source to Sea*. There is no image – at least not in Whitehead’s collection – that enables a sense of sound, smell or taste and these are notable senses that help produce the landscape experience.

THE BODY IN THE IMAGE

Looking at the photographic documentation of *Walking to Work* more broadly, it becomes clear that there are also close-up images of the land in which some part of Whitehead’s body is included in the frame. For *Host (Transplant)* – a performance in which the artist travelled by foot and train from Abercych, Wales to Darmstadt, Germany whilst carrying a small potted tree in 2003 – Whitehead presents close up images of the top of his own head and the tree that he tasked himself to carry across a number of borders (Whitehead, 2006: p.25). The close up of Whitehead’s head and the tree he is carrying is a constant feature in all of the presented photographic documentation for this work and only the view he sees changes in each image. This might be read as signifying the development of his journey as he travels from one location to another.



(Figure 22. Head and plant on p.26 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; photo: Simon Whitehead)

The images for *Host (Transplant)* do not focus on looking inward or downwards towards the details of the land but rather show how a consistent detail (in this case a displaced plant from Wales and the top of the artist's head) might enable an audience to grasp the change in Whitehead's perception of the places he travels through and shape how others might respond to his presence there. Both the plant and Whitehead's body are presented in a similar way: with the top most part revealed at the expense of all else there is a sense that Whitehead is reluctant to present the whole picture. Whitehead seems less interested in showing his audience what he looked like whilst carrying out the action of the work, than in capturing what his perception of his environment was. The images look similar to a video game where the player controls the protagonist from view as if hovering above them, in many cases the gamer can select a particular screen-view that allows the perspective to show the scene as if from the eyes of the character or from the top of the character's head and their hands (often holding a weapon or tool of some sort). Although the sense of the viewer's control is not replicated in Whitehead's still image it still feels like the viewer seeing the environment from his immediate perspective reinforcing the sense that the viewer is included in his movement. It seems that Whitehead is inviting us to consider the performance experience from his perspective, to imagine ourselves in his shoes.

Haptic visuality can be used again to consider a different set of close-up images taken from elsewhere in *Walking to Work*, this time evoking the sense of touch by presenting detailed representations of Whitehead's hands or his participant's hands as they interact with the land or with objects.



(Figure 23. Hand in daises on p.50 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; photo: Simon Whitehead)

(Figure 24. Tying ribbon in a tree of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; photo: Simon Whitehead)

These photographs evoke the tactility of the performer's environment and offer the viewer a greater connection to Whitehead's work and the surfaces he engages with through visual touch. The receptivity of the images rests in the way they present the gentle connection between fingertips and greenery. The images show the landscape as something to be experienced and enjoyed. Looking at these images it is possible to imagine the feel of the grass and daisies as they slip through your fingers or the brush of the tree branch as you tighten the ribbon. The images conjure the sense of a gentle touch which can be interpreted as Whitehead's projected desire to respect and take care of the land. Certainly, the images symbolise the significant attention that the artist is prepared to give to and receives from the land in and through his work. There is something particular about showing the bodily connection with the land which goes against the dominant presentations of landscape as an untouched wilderness. Perhaps a different kind of romanticisation is apparent in these images though, a presentation which builds expectations of an easy, free flowing and sensual relationship between the bodies and land which may not be fully realised in the performance to the extent that the artist intended. However, such a romantic presentation in Whitehead's photography is not regressive; he is not interested in offering representations of an arbitrary perceived reality of the way the land and performance looked, or representations based on the expectations of landscape

that are so dominant through tourism and as shaped by tourists' values and expectations. He is more concerned with presenting an expression of the sensual relationship with lands that he hopes his works inspire.

In *Source to Sea* the audience of the photographic documentation is never shown any detail of the Ystwyth River and key moments from the description of the work are not represented in photographic form, or at least not in a way that is made clear to the viewer. The description of *Source to Sea* makes reference to a number of actions during the process - 'we get out of our cars and shake hands', 'I sit by rowan trees near the road in Cwm Glas and pay respect to my gran', and 'I collect a bag full of ripe berries' (Whitehead, 2006: p.40) - none of which are represented in photographic form. Equally, there are a number of images which seem to show things that are not referenced in the written text providing contextual information of the work. What the audience are offered in text or in pictures are moments that never show enough to give all the contextual information needed to make a simplistic judgement on what the image is of. This seems like a deliberate strategy and suggests that Whitehead is keen to leave gaps for the audience of the documentation to fill with their imagination in that his photographs require a certain amount of working out. Emphasis then, is placed on the audience of the documentation to interpret the photographs and think of the kinds of meanings exposed by the performance and the land through the information that is made available. Whitehead, apparently acknowledging that even those who were participants or audience members would have taken away their own experience of his work, is keen to leave enough space within the documentation for anyone engaging with the material to have multiple interpretations of it. Just as those who walk the land and experience it bring their own understandings and interpretations to the work, so too do the audiences of the documentation.

MID-RANGE PHOTOGRAPHY

Whilst the close-up pictures leave a lot of space for imaginative responses, I would suggest that Whitehead establishes other modes of photography for more pragmatic reasons. The second

mode of photography that Whitehead uses in his work – examples of which can also be found on the pages about in *Source to Sea* – is mid-range shots of the artist and his collaborators during the artistic process. Here we see the bodies of participants in the act of engagement either with each other or with the land.



(Figure 25. Images from p.41a of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; photos: Heike Roms)

The above images show the artists whilst they were on the three day walk to find the source of the river Ystwyth. The bodies in all four images are engaged either with the land, themselves or each other. The first image on the left shows Whitehead as he walks through the trees with Rachel Rosenthal. The second image shows Whitehead as he draws or writes on his pad, perhaps in response to something that he has seen or felt. The third image from the left shows Whitehead and Rosenthal hugging, an act which we learn from other contextual information on the page signalled the end of their journey. The fourth image from the left shows both the artists kneeling on the banks of a river. The inclusion of the performers' bodies provides extra contextual information that was not apparent in the close-up photographs. In some senses the inclusion of their bodies limits the scope for interpretation, in that the focal point is mostly on people doing things – exemplified by the fact that the figures are always placed at the centre of the image. On the other hand, their inclusion does offer stimulus for a different kind of imaginative response – one that invites questions like: who are these people? Why are they there? What are they doing? What is their back story? In other words, responses that focus on the narrative of the performers.



(Figure 26. Images from p.41b of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; photos: Keith Morris)

And yet, as an act of interpretive assemblage, as Shanks would call it, it is impossible to view these images without considering the other fragments that document the action. Other contextual information available on the page in the description of the work gives a strong indication that these were the same actions and same key moments of the journey discussed in the text. In this sense the second set of Whitehead's images seem to act as evidence of the performance having happened, a way of legitimising the accompanying descriptions. That does not prevent imaginative responses to these images but their positioning alongside other materials does mark them – in a sense – as evidence of the written descriptions. The final mode of photography employed by Whitehead produces similar kinds of engagement.

All these images are taken in wide-shot which takes in the artists' entire bodies, the audience (at least some of them) and the space in which they are presenting their work. The idea of these images is to convey a sense of what an audience member at the live event would have seen. There is a great amount of detail and contextual information which is discernible from these images, even more so than the previous mode. From the images above it is possible to gain a sense of the space, action and even time of the event. Whilst the setting of the other photographs varies (woods,

fields, riverbanks, roads, etc), the wide shot images are unified by their setting, the Aberystwyth Arts Centre. In the other images it is clear that they have been taken outside during the day due to lack of artificial light, and the general brightness and clarity of the photographs. However in the shots in the final set, time is more difficult to distinguish because they are taken from inside the arts centre. It is not clear how much artificial light is being used. The action in the images is contextualised by the written description of the event in front of a live audience on the conjoining page which states:

At the end of the week, we give a public performance in Aberystwyth, mapping and reliving the journey with object and fragments of memory. Rachel asks me to explain to the audience why I made the jelly... At the end of the public performance we re-enact the embrace.

(Whitehead, 2006: p.40)

It is clear that like the previous mode, which acted as evidence of the artists' process, the final mode of photographic documentation provides evidence of an event which was performed by the artists in front of a live audience. The photographs are positioned next to other visual stimulus, namely scanned copies of Whitehead's drawings. No explanation is given as to at what point in the process Whitehead did the drawings or what part they played in the live event. The drawings are not consistent in their subject matter. Some seem to be topographical drawings, detailing aspects of the land, while in others the drawings seem reflective, an inked representation of what Whitehead thought he looked like in the landscape.

DRAWINGS AND SKETCHES

Photographs, such as this last set, do offer the viewer a certain amount of contextual information from which they might gain a reasonable understanding of the relationship of the image to the performance (in terms of time, place, subject). However, such things are not as easily distinguishable in Whitehead's drawings or sketches.



(Figure 27. Sketches from p.41 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; sketches: Simon Whitehead; collages: Barnaby Oliver)

The sketches offer a different kind of quality, one which disrupts an easy or simple representation of the work and landscape. Although Whitehead's drawings are all presented by a thin lined pen with either blue or black ink, the subject matter of his images vary a great deal and so make them difficult subjects for analysis. Fortunately, I have had direct experience of Whitehead's practice, having been involved in a series of workshops run by the artist. During the workshops I was introduced to his working methods (including his use of drawing as a method for exploration), experience I can bring to bear on my analysis of his drawings. In 2012 whilst studying for an MA at Aberystwyth University, I attended a six-week-long workshop with Whitehead alongside another five students from my class. During this time we were introduced to Whitehead's working methods and were led in a creative investigation. The purpose of the workshops (which was included as part of Research Methods, a taught module of the MA) was to gain an understanding of how Whitehead's creative practice contributes to his wider research methodology. Over the six weeks drawings and written reflections were encouraged as a key aspect of our movement work in a variety of locations.

During his sessions the group explored Whitehead's working methods and were invited to develop our own creative materials from exercises led and tasks given by the artist. Although this work was intensive and intimate it would not be fair to suggest that Whitehead laid out any explicit explanation of his working methods or any theoretical framework to read his work through in these sessions. Neither did Whitehead offer any detailed explanation of why he draws or how he employs drawing within his creative practice. Many of the positions in this section are based on my own

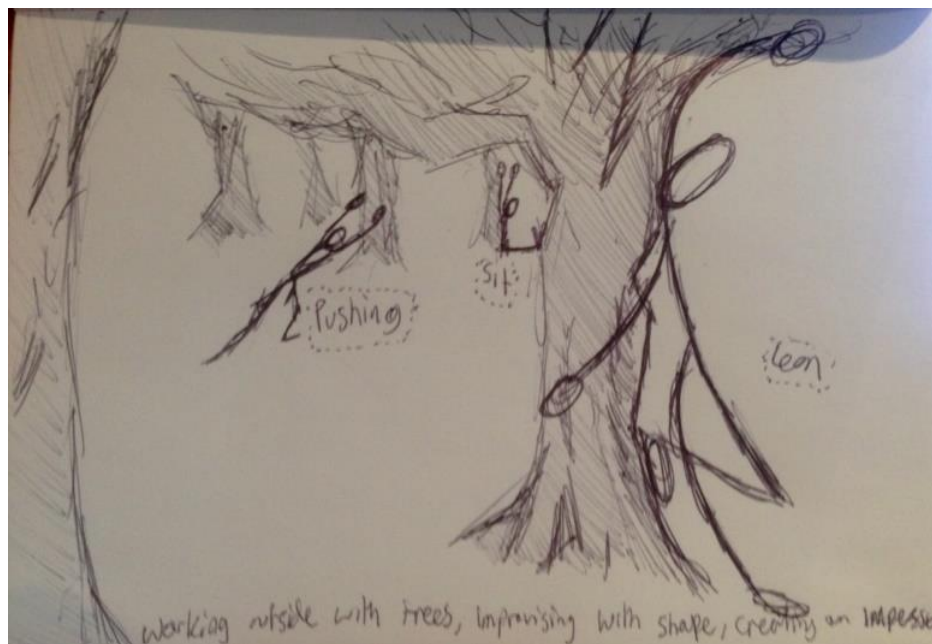
personal observations from that six-week period. The first observation is that drawing is not simply a method for supplementing a live event but is a key method which helps Whitehead to investigate his relationship with the land and the environments he works in and another mode of expression that he relies on to express those relationships. The inclusion of his drawings alongside other documentary materials also marks them as fragments and signals their function as documentation. Whitehead's drawings therefore are an aspect of his overarching working process which produces its own artistic product but which also consequently produces a representation of his working process.

The exposition of a creative process I shared with Whitehead emphasises how drawings feature as part of his creative process and will enhance our understandings of his work and its relation to landscape. The initial workshops explored the body and its relationship to environment in a studio context through a focus on bones, and how our bones function in our body and how they are shaped by our movements. On the day, Whitehead arrived carrying a black plastic briefcase containing a selection of human bones. These bones and the group's discussions of bones in general would provide the primary imaginative stimulus for all the movement exercises that were to follow, improvisations and experimentations in relation to other chosen sites as the process evolved. Whitehead would take out a particular bone and talk about its place within the body and its role in human anatomy; he infused this with stories about his experience as a movement artist and stories of accidents and problems he has had with broken bones as a consequence of accidents. Whitehead suggested that if we were to gain a heightened consciousness of what our bones are and how they function within our body during improvisation, then we might gain a deeper understanding of how our bodies work and how we move within our environment as a whole.

The group were to consider how the improvisations made us think about our bodies in relation to the space and in particular to the surfaces we were performing on, and we were given periods of quiet reflection after each improvisation to consider what we had learned. Whitehead invited us to write, draw and respond – in whatever way we felt appropriate – to each improvisation.

The writing and drawing enabled the group to put their immediate response to something that they were feeling at the time on paper. The drawings were used not as a way of critiquing the exercise but rather giving instant feedback on how we felt directly after it.

From the third week of Whitehead's workshops, the group were invited to venture out of the studio space and into the expansive grounds of the university campus, and apply similar movement exercises in different environments. Whilst the work was always anchored to our central focus of bones and our heightened sense of the ways that bones move (in) our bodies, the group was increasingly challenged to think of how our bodies related to the different surfaces we came across on our explorations. Again, we were to give ourselves time after each improvisation in order to respond in writing or drawing. Just as there was a contrast between the ways my spine felt in relation to the hard floor or walls versus the soft flesh of my fellow participants, the grounds of the university campus provided many other different kinds of surfaces to explore.



(Figure 28. Sketches from workshop, Aberystwyth, Andrew Henry, 2012)

Significantly, the introduction of new environments produced different kinds of relationship than were available in the studio and these relationships were reflected in the drawings. For one

improvisation I found myself climbing up a tree and, once entangled amongst the branches, I began to explore the ideas of rolling, sliding, pivoting, leaning, pushing, and resisting that I had been working with in the studio exercises. In my drawings I reflected on how pliable the tree branches were whilst being strong and thought of them as bones. I was fascinated by the way that the tree was ambivalent to my action whilst shaping my movements and resisting certain things I was doing. I noticed my spine once again and how the tree had provided space for my spine to rest in, like the pocket of a jacket.

NOTES, SCORES AND DRAWINGS AS DOCUMENTATION

This experience lends itself to a broader analysis of the multiple ways that Whitehead uses drawings as a reflective tool and documentary strategy in his artistic process. The use of note taking and drawings as a way for dancers to record the movements they have performed in rehearsal or will have to perform in performance is a long established practice and is often considered as personal aspect of the artistic process specific to each individual dancer. As Karreman explains: 'drawn or written dance notes usually function as a private memory aid for dancers' (2013: p.125). Dance notes provide a particular way of accessing movement in which 'structure and intention may be illustrated by various modes of writing, for example, consisting of keywords or metaphorical images' (ibid) and their author is often the only person to access them. For choreographer Wayne McGregor, dance notes function 'not at all as straightforward documentation, a simple record of the dance piece, or a notation in the traditional sense of the term where the "diary" could be used to reconstruct the piece, but an active, living, ideas score' (Blackwell et al, 2004: p.68). Whitehead's drawings vary in subject matter and form but he rarely presents enough material on any single performance that an audience could use them as instruction for reconstructing his performances. The idea of a living score, though, strikes me as more pertinent to his style.

Note taking is still a preferred mode of documentation today even in light of new technologies designed with an ability to capture and store the movements instantly on digital film.

Many choreographers advise their dancers to avoid the use of video technology within their creative practice because of a perceived distance that is created on film that shifts the focus onto the external presentation of movements rather than an internal – more impulsive – process. For example, choreographer Pieter C. Scholten of the Emio Greco | PC dance company has said on this topic:

In principle, we never give things on video or DVD to the dancers. Sometimes if there is an emergency and we are not there. I think it can also be dangerous because you see a result, so you copy from the outside. You need to know from the inside first before you see it.

(Wijers, 2010: p.44)

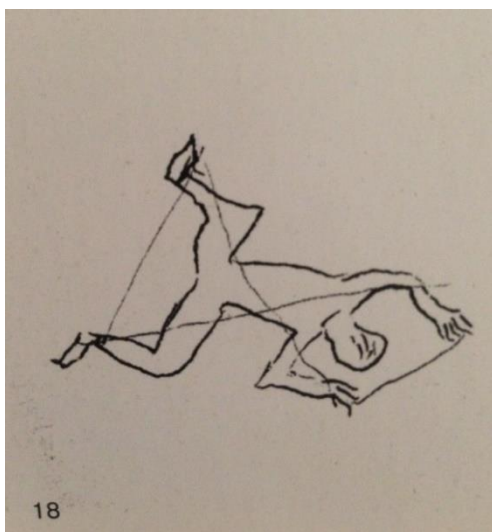
Drawings and scores are still a reliable way of documenting dance whilst not being so prescriptive as to take away from the emotional, sensorial and imaginative experience of the creative process. Many dancers attempt to find ways to transmit the ‘experiential knowledge’ of dance. Dance scholar Mark Franko points out that an important change occurred at the beginning of the nineteenth century when the focus of the ‘host material’ of the dance score shifted from the notation of the path of the dancer to the visual display of the body of the dancer. As Franko puts it: ‘While the [dance] treatise [by Blasis of 1820] might be considered a technical manual, in it, for the first time, writing addresses not only the *what* but the *how* of dance’ (Franko, 2011: p.326). Some of Whitehead’s drawings can be read as a kind of choreographic score, a way of showing the flow of his movement in a static form. In two examples taken from *Walking to Work*, Whitehead depicts an anatomically proportional representation of a human body and lines overlay the images or move out from the body representing the motion of the body. Depicting movement in drawings has been a longstanding occupation for artists, as the eminent English art critic of the Victorian era, John Ruskin pointed out:

Your dunce thinks they are standing still, and draws them all fixed; your wise man sees the change or changing in them, and draws them so, – the animal in its motion, the tree in its growth, the cloud in its course, the mountain in its wearing

away. Try always, whenever you look at a form, to see the lines in it which have had power over its past fate and will have power over its futurity. Those are its *awful* lines; see that you seize on those, whatever else you miss.

(Ruskin, 1904)

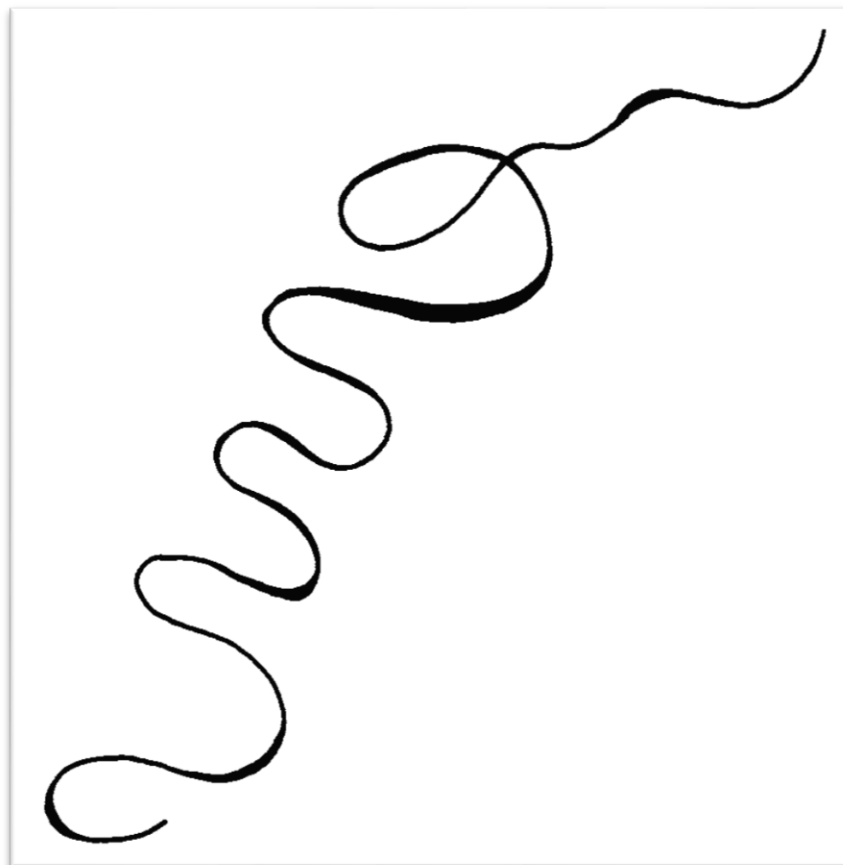
Ruskin suggested that in art, as in life, wisdom lies in '*knowing the way things are going*' and instructed his students to consider and articulate what he called leading lines which are the lines that embody 'the past history, present action and future potential of a thing' (Ingold, 2007: p.129). Notably, there are leading lines present in Whitehead's drawings. The two drawings below represent movement in similar ways. To think of the lines as indicators of movement we must imagine the figures as having an ability to leave a mark or trail of their movement on a three-dimensional canvas. As they move, the pathways are exposed around their bodies (consider the tracks left by an aeroplane as it travels across the sky). The centre lines in the drawing on the right can be read as the trail of the figure walking into the distance. The lines cut a straight path through a forest of trees demarked by vertical lines on either side of the frame. The image on the left gives the impression that the performer is lying on his back and the marks above him have been left by the movement of either the hands or feet of the figure. It is possible to consider the movement of the performer being akin to that of a sharp edged figure of eight.



(Left, Figure 29. Sketch of a body on p.18 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; sketch: Simon Whitehead)

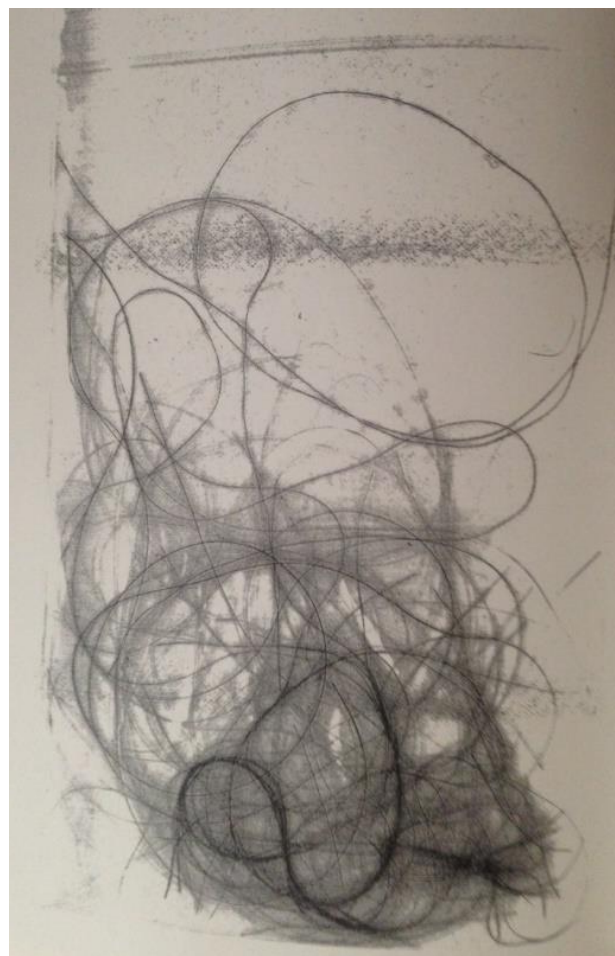
(Figure 30. Sketch of a walk in the woods on p.18 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; sketch: Simon Whitehead)

Paul Klee's comment that 'drawing is taking a line for a walk' (1961: p.105) offers provocation when thinking about how drawing can represent or even embody the movement of a performer. Emphasis has to be placed on the influence of the free flowing line itself. Ingold expresses this by questioning in *Lines: a Brief History*: 'What do walking, weaving, observing, singing, storytelling, drawing and writing have in common? The answer is that they all proceed along lines of one kind or another' (2007: p.1). Ingold explores how lines can evoke movement through a discussion of a drawing from Laurence Sterne's 1762, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy Gentleman*:



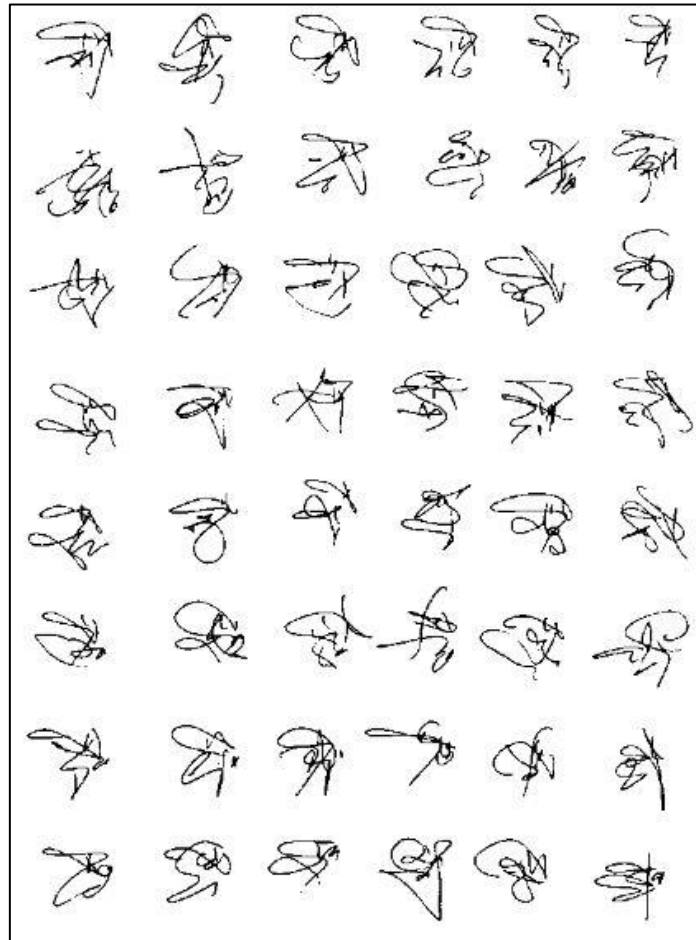
(Figure 31. Line depicting the movement of the Corporal's stick, Laurence Sterne, 1762)

The squiggle was included in the original novel to give an impression of a gesture performed by one of its main characters – the Corporal – and specifically the movement of his stick as he waved it about in the air. Ingold argues that the line embodies a certain duration, it marks the movement from the beginning to the end of that particular gesture. The line is a trace of movement which we can still read and recreate. Indeed, in his book Ingold invites us to translate the line of the Corporal's stick using a pen to trace the movement in mid-air. There is a certain resemblance to the line depicting the movement of the Corporal's stick in the lines that emanate from the figures in Whitehead's drawings above. However there are other drawings from Whitehead's collection that seem to focus on presenting the linear flow of movement more than the physicality of the performer in action. These images are abstract and are open to multiple responses but they do still invoke a sense of movement in a similar way to Sterne's Corporal.



(Figure 32. Scribble on p.61 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; sketch: Simon Whitehead)

The lines in this image look as though the pencil has stayed connected to the surface as it traced the movement of the hand. Connecting again with dance, the linear patterns of the line function in a similar way to the hieroglyphic marks of the dancer and choreographer Nancy Stark Smith:



(Figure 33. Hieroglyphs, New York, Nancy Stark Smith, 1988)

Smith's hieroglyphs dwell in a blurred space somewhere between dancing and writing, where the movements of the one influence the rhythm and figures of the other:

The curved lines, double waves and rounded lines, swishes, swirls, swerves and loops of Smith's hieroglyphs encircle and create spaces- but more importantly there is a vital crack in the line that allows the inner space to leak out into the wider

space, generating an *ekstasis*⁴¹ across the page beyond the marks themselves

(Albright, 1989b: p.49).

The free flowing lines of Whitehead, Smith and the Corporal's stick can all be understood as a kind of score that both represents and informs movement. Certainly, these ways of notating movement directly flow from the sensations of moving. Smith, for example, observes that her hieroglyphs 'precisely capture the frequency of [her] mood, mind and body rhythm', and that the 'connections' she 'found ... between ... dancing and the movement of [her] pen' were so 'direct' that she sees both as forms of 'signature' (Albright, 1989a: p.37).

For the artist Catrin Webster, drawing is both a conscious and subconscious intellectual activity that creates a place of visual and cognitive engagement. Webster creates works of art – drawings and paintings – in response to the places she travels through. As she walks and observes the land Webster draws using a mixture of pigment found and collected on her travels and watercolour paint. These are a selection from her *Spanish Walk Book*:



(Left Figure 34. Ink and watercolour on paper a from *Spanish Walk Book*, Catrin Webster, 1990)



(Right Figure 35. Ink and watercolour on paper b from *Spanish Walk Book*, Catrin Webster, 1990)

⁴¹ *Ekstasis*: to be or stand outside oneself, a removal to elsewhere.

Webster explains that drawing, for her:

Is a zone in its own right, as the activity requires the construction of a special territory, both in terms of thought and place. A drawing is a thought and an object... It creates a three-way dialogue between the new visual information the drawing presents; its visual properties and what they may symbolize; and the thoughts themselves as stimulated by experience in the first place.

(2012: p.29)

From observing Whitehead working during our workshops, it is clear that drawing offers a way for him to reflect on the movement of his body and the feelings that his dances generate. Nigel Stewart proposes that these kinds of notation ‘*mark* the very manner in which the object is kinaesthetically perceived by, and danced from, the subject's consciousness’ (1998, p.49). Understanding Whitehead’s drawings as choreographic notation allows us to consider the phenomenological relationship between the dancing subject (Whitehead himself) and the object that is *danced* (the drawing) and the ways that such danced objects also enable or compel others to dance as well.

WAYFARING AND MESHWORKS

There is something in Whitehead’s expressive line drawings that brings us back to Ingold and to a discussion of how these drawings relate to or evoke a sense of landscape. In *Lines: a Brief History* (2007) Ingold sets out to present an expansive anthropology of lines. Of the key ideas that emerges from the work – pertinent to Whitehead’s work and his documentary drawings – are the differences between ‘traveling’ and ‘wayfaring’ and differences between thinking life as a ‘network’ or ‘meshwork’. Ingold aims to explain how the line, in the course of its history, has been detached from the movement that gave rise to it. Once the trace of a continuous gesture, the line has been fragmented into a succession of points or dots. This fragmentation, Ingold argues, has taken place in the related fields of *travel*, where wayfaring is replaced by destination-oriented transport.

Ingold introduces and explains the distinctions between 'wayfaring' and 'transport' as a polarisation to understand how people experience travel in their environments. The wayfarer epitomises movement — wayfarers are their movements (2007: p.75). For the wayfarer there is no idea of point to point connectionism — no thought to move from A to B and then to C — rather movement is a way of being; as with life, journeys are always unfinished and continuous. As the antithesis to wayfaring, Ingold depicts transport as a 'destination-orientated' (2007: p.79) mode of movement that traverses across rather than along the world. Transported travelling is mostly deployed by Ingold as a Western tradition, with movement being less about the experience of the journey and more about the speed at which one can arrive at the end point.

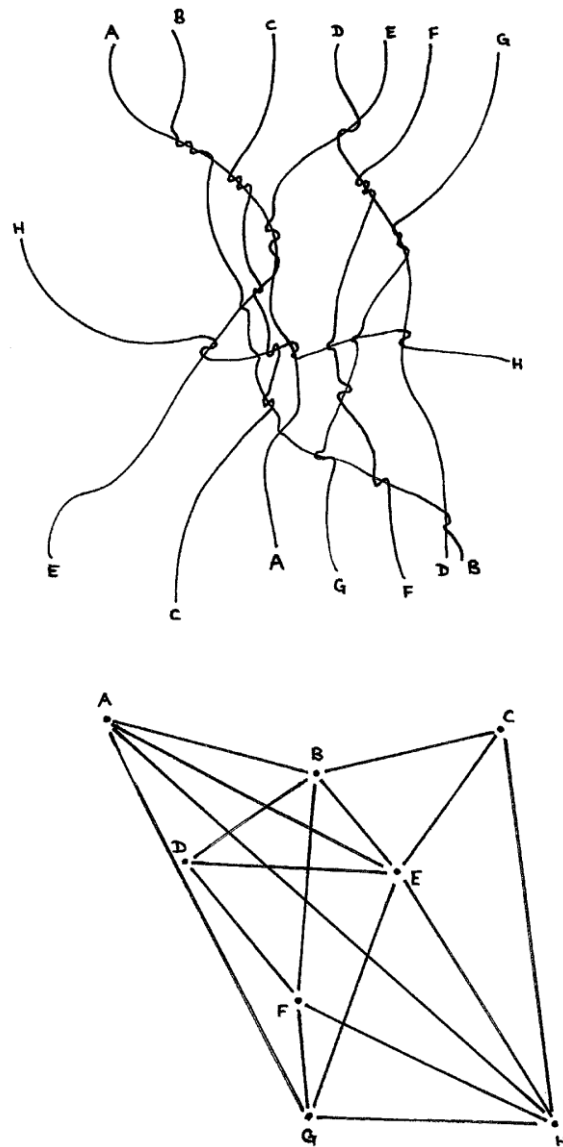
Whitehead's creative practice can be understood as a process of wayfaring; his walks and other performances are more concerned with the experience of the land as he observes or interacts with it, rather than an attempt to move from certified positions. Even in performances where he journeys from a distinct location to a distinct destination, Whitehead is not interested in efficiency or the attempt to move from one point to the other as quickly as possible rather his focus is on the journey and the things and people he encounters during the movement. Whitehead takes the cues of direction from the land itself and will often veer off the established paths in pursuit of things that take his interest or because he is following a different kind of path (along a river bank, or tracking an animal trail, for example).

Ingold offers further provocation through his distinction between 'networks' and 'meshworks'. He explains that a network is the lines that join specific points of connection. To visualise this we can consider a join the dots puzzle in which the participant draws straight lines from one area to another. A meshwork on the other hand is a visualisation of interwoven trails: 'The lines of the meshwork are the trails along which life is lived' (Ingold, 2007: p.80). The movements of imperial powers are offered by Ingold as the prime example of how networks function:

Imperial powers have sought to occupy the inhabited world, throwing a network of connections across what appears, in their eyes, to be not a tissue of trails but a blank surface. These connections are lines of occupation. They facilitate the outward passage of personnel and equipment to sites of settlement and extraction, and the return of the riches drawn therefrom.

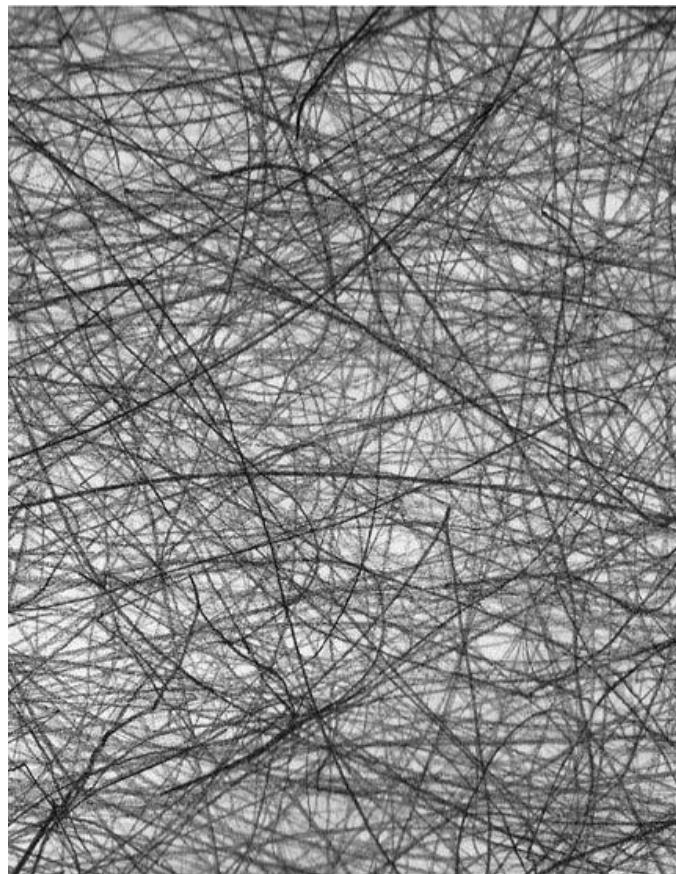
(Ingold, 2007:p.80).

The meshwork on the other hand depicts an entanglement of lines, trails, which are continually woven as life goes on along them. Ingold offers a visual representation of the difference between networks (on top) and meshworks (below):



(Figure 36. Depiction of networks and meshworks, Tim Ingold, 2007)

Ingold, in short, connects the network with traveling and the meshwork with wayfaring. Further his central thesis is that 'it is fundamentally through the practices of wayfaring that beings inhabit the world' (Ingold, 2007: p.89). Wayfaring is 'neither placeless nor place-bound but place-making. It could be described as a flowing line proceeding through a succession of places' (ibid: p.100). The idea of wayfaring as place-making and the world being visualised as a meshwork connects neatly with the phenomenological conceptions of landscape as constructed from experience. For a collaborative project entitled Locator 22⁴² Whitehead along with nine other participants created a drawing by collectively drawing on a piece of paper with their non-dominant hands for one hour. The resulting image seems to offer a visual representation akin to Ingold's meshwork, only more detailed and textured.



(Figure 37. Locator 22 group drawing, North Pembrokeshire, Carl Lavery and Simon Whitehead, 2012)

⁴² A detailed description of the locator project can be found on page 38 of *Walking to Work*

Rather than depicting the movement of a performer's body or the response to an embodied experience, the Locator 22 drawing shows a seemingly endless wandering of discrete lines as they overlap, align and cross over each other. This image constitutes an ideal visual representation of the meshwork in action. If wayfaring is the most fundamental mode by which living beings inhabit the earth, as Ingold advises, then Whitehead's drawing articulates – even if it is inadvertently – the way that people and other beings who in layering a trail of life, contribute to its 'weave and texture' (ibid: p.82).

With this analysis in mind, it is also important to point out that Whitehead is not isolated to one style of drawing in this documentary strategy. There are also a number of images throughout *Walking to Work* that depict things the artist has encountered during his practice. In 2002 Whitehead spent 23 days walking from Abercych in West Wales to London with visual artist Peter Bodenham and his Jack Russell terrier, Gertie. In an attempt to be faithful to original walking paths, the two men and dog walked over 300 miles across fields, along paths, tracks and main roads. At the end of each day the artists would document their experience in a diary, excerpts from which they would exhibit at Chapter Arts Centre at a later date. The drawings below depict Gertie the dog and three different sticks that he picked up along the route: on the left is a stick from Tal y Llyn, in the middle a stick from Llancloudy, and on the right a stick from Hillingdon.



(Figure 38. Sketches of a dog with a stick on p.12 of *Walking to Work*, Abercych, 2006; sketch Simon Whitehead)

These drawings are less focused on representing movement and flow and more about the visual interpretation of moments throughout the journey. The drawings still manage to evoke a sense of place as choreographer and performer (and an audience member at the exhibition), Rosemary Lee highlights in a reflection of the images:

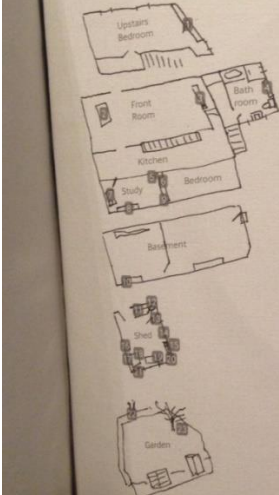
A stick bringing a smell and texture of what is beyond the metropolis. Once supported free in the air then companion to your dog. Somehow this stick seemed to convey the duration of your journey and the visceral sense of it.

(Whitehead, 2006: p.12).

In this case, Whitehead's drawings seemed to have evoked a sensory response from the audience member. It is clear that Whitehead's drawings do not offer a unified concept that allows for a consistent interpretation of the land or the performances that happen there. The drawings are a messy and unstable mode of documentation that disturbs any singular or homogenised explanation of his body of work. With that said, there is something about Whitehead's drawings that evokes a kind of experiential relationship, whether we understand the lines as scores or traces or as depictions of things seen.

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Index by Object



Index of objects from each project and their location in Simon Whitehead's house. Photographs by Phil Martin.

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(Figure 39. Index on p.87 from *Walking to Work*, Simon Whitehead, 2006)

Whitehead's drawings do not work in isolation. Like the photographs they are presented alongside other forms of documentation. At the end of *Walking to Work* Whitehead brings the different modes of documentation together by creating an index that requires the reader to engage with different modes of documentation at the same time.

Whitehead has drawn an outline of the interior of his house within which he has written numbers which correspond to a written index. The index explains that the number is representative of a particular object and that the object has been photographed in Whitehead's house. The index then directs the viewer from the number > to the list of objects > to the page number of the photograph > to the page with the photograph on it. This strategy invites the viewer to take a different route through the book than they would most likely have taken to arrive there (the approach to reading that moves in a linear fashion from front cover to back). Whitehead's index/interactive map invites the viewer to consider a different format for exploring the documentary materials and opens up new ways of understanding the material through such repositioning. This, again, signals Whitehead's attempts to disrupt any singular account of his material. The index is a useful mechanism that insures there is more than one way to approach his documentation and more than one interpretation available.

SOUND RECORDINGS

Whitehead's use of an index to reformat the presentation of his documentary materials is one example of how he uses presentation in a creative way to allow for fresh readings of his documents. On the back page of *Walking to Work* the artist opens out the scope of his documentation further with the inclusion of a C.D. containing sound recordings. It is evident that the ways in which an audience might interpret the sound in Whitehead's work differs dependent on whether they are listening to recordings presented on C.D. or the sound at one of the artist's live events. The different performance modes produce different kinds of relationship to sound which has an impact on how it is interpreted or analysed, arguably the *Walking to Work* C.D. foregrounds

sound as one of the most important dramaturgical layers from which to gain a relationship, this is certainly not the case at one of the artist's live events where there are multiple dramaturgical layers which combine to create meaning. The absence of Whitehead's body (other than what is heard of his body) in the recorded sound material has an effect on how we think about and react to the work. In an account of listening to a tape recorded music concert, Linda Dusman writes: 'Without a performer there to instruct my listening via facial expressions, body movements, and the shaping of the sound itself - and then to smile at me at the end of the process - I have no idea whether I have successfully negotiated this sonic terrain' (2000: p.339). Likewise, there is little contextual information on Whitehead's C.D. to instruct an audience on how to approach and understand the material so the listeners' reactions are based more instinctive and inspire more subjective or personal responses. In Whitehead's live events he might draw attention to sound through physical or verbal gestures or foreground listening as part of the performances dramaturgy. The body, as Dusman articulates, is one of the most significant indicators to aid an audience's interpretation of the sounds they are hearing.

Dusman also contends that the lack of a visible performer can turn the listener's attention back onto their own body. Her work describes a number of performance encounters in which there is no artist present and explores the ways in which the absence of a performing body causes the participant to become more aware of their own reactions and of their position as an embodied subject. Sewell (2010) articulates Dusman's argument through a detailed description of a particular bodily reaction she had while listening to a piece called *Ground Techniques* by Neil Luck, Sewall states: 'The opening section comprises a series of breathing sounds (more specifically, the sounds of the inhalation of breath and the plosive sounds of the release of held breath), that are then imitated by instrumentalists. Listening to this, I found myself feeling tense, holding my own breath' (2010: p.60). Whitehead's recordings produce a similar effect; the form of the documentation concentrates attention onto the act of listening and without the artist's body (or any other contextual information) to guide the listener the sound can inspire a more self-reflective relationship to the

sound and enable particular bodily reactions only available in this concentrated format. I will attempt to explain this further through analysis of specific examples of Whitehead's C.D.

I characterise the *listening to* of Whitehead's recordings as sound events, which are a sound or a sound sequence understood in its particular spatial and temporal context. In this case, the sound of Whitehead's recordings within the particular timeframes they themselves designate and presented within the confines of my own home. While it is impossible to generalise how sound events are listened to, Delalande (1998) describes listening to sound and/or music as involving several behaviours:

Taxonomic listening: Trying to understand the form and structure of what is heard

Empathic listening: Becoming aware of immediate reactions to what is heard

Figurativisation: Searching for a narrative discourse in what is heard

Search for law of organisation: Searching for rules that define what is heard

Immersed listening: Feeling part of the context while listening

Non-listening: Having lost interest or concentration

Delalande (1998), as expounded by Landy (2007)

In 'Listening to the Body's Excitations' Reiser argues that: 'Describing listening as behavioural patterns or a response system can be useful, allowing for a more focused application of compositional tools, as well as the framing of listeners' encounter with the sound' (2010: p.57). Further, Reiser posits that the sounds we hear are intuitively matched with a particular listening behaviour or behaviours. In other words, certain sound characteristics – that is, aspects within the sounds we hear – may bring particular listening behaviours to the fore. For instance, the use of sounds which evoke a sense of place by presenting sounds within the environment (what Reiser calls 'spatialised' sound) may encourage an immersed listening behaviour. If listeners are confronted with a musical structure that changes throughout the duration of the track then listeners are likely to listen out for the laws of transformation. Reiser argues that listening behaviours are intuitive rather than consciously chosen and, realistically, most listeners' will fluctuate between different kinds of listening behaviours. The distinction of a wide range of listening behaviours is useful for

distinguishing different kinds of sound event and the particular reactions the listener has to what is heard and I draw on these distinctions within my analyses of Whitehead's recordings.

SOUNDSCAPES

There is one other term worth unpacking before moving on to a closer analysis of specific sound recordings on the *Walking to Work* C.D. The term 'soundscape' has been used by a variety of disciplines to describe the relationship between a landscape and the composition of its sound and seems particularly pertinent to Whitehead's recordings, especially considering the core themes and ideas that underpin the artist's work. Named in 1969 by composer R. Murray Schafer, a soundscape is, above all, a conceptual apparatus, one which designates an acoustic environment that listeners experience as surrounding them in space. Schafer articulated the soundscape as 'a sonic version of landscape, an object of contemplation' (Helmreich, 2010: p.10). In an attempt to describe entire sonic energy produced by a landscape Krause (1987) constructed an initial taxonomy of sound. The result was an explanation of an overlap between three distinct sonic sources: geophonies, biophonies, and anthrophonies.

- Geophonies are the result of sonic energy produced by nonbiological natural agents such as winds, volcanoes, sea waves, running water, rain, thunderstorms, lightning, avalanches, earthquakes, and flooding.
- Biophonies are the results of animal vocalisations (song, contact and alarm calls, voices).
- Anthrophonies are the result of all the sounds produced by technical devices (engines, blades, wheel revolutions, industries, etc.)

(Farina, 2014: p.1)

As with other natural resources, soundscapes relate to a number of subjective ideals which are dependent on the listener, some of which include: cultural, recreational, therapeutic, educational, artistic, and aesthetic. For Atkinson, soundscapes not only have tangible effects but are 'a product of how we live' (Atkinson, 2005: p.3). He evidences this by showing that analysis of particular soundscapes provides much information about the character of their location. Wilson

(1999) suggested that the natural world is the most information-rich environment that humans can experience, and believes that some of the most important information is conveyed through sound. He states further that we should be more receptive to the value of sound. Schafer aims to 'direct the ear of the listener towards the new soundscape of contemporary life' (1969: p.3). He proposes that we try to listen to our acoustic environment as if it were a musical composition, the intention being to 'open' our ears. Schafer's work during the 1970s (1977, 1978) and in particular the work he did in Vancouver, compiles earwitness accounts or descriptions of the infrastructures and processes (including ship's whistles, foghorns and civil defence sirens), photographs, sound graphs and charts, and maps illustrating the geography of the sounds, to construct revealing visual depictions of aural ecologies. In its attempt to describe sound and the ways in which certain characteristics might evoke a sense of landscape through Whitehead's recordings, my analysis makes a similar attempt to map out aural ecologies as Schafer did.

Although Tim Ingold states that the term soundscape has been useful in 'drawing attention to a sensory register that had been neglected relative to sight' (2011: p.136), he raises some significant reservations with the term. Firstly, Ingold argues that there is little point in building on a term like soundscape because landscape, he argues, is already a better concept for describing the world precisely because it has no particular ties to any sensory register. Ingold argues that soundscape splits up the world in a way that is not realistic. Ingold argues that vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell are all integral to our perceptual experience. The senses, as Steven Connor has observed, 'are multiply related' (2001); and as the psychologist James Gibson argued, 'the phenomena of perception are engaged by sensory systems rather than discrete modalities' (1968a). Listening, for Gibson, 'includes not only the tensor tympanic reflex but also ear cocking and head turning for localisation' (1968b). Ingold, Connor and Gibson all share the same position that in ordinary practice sensory registers cooperate so closely, and with such overlap of function, that their respective contributions are impossible to tease apart. Ingold states: 'the environment that we

experience, know and move around in is not sliced up along the lines of the sensory pathways by which we enter into it. The world we perceive is the same world' (2011: p.136).

However, Ingold does suggest that landscapes can be 'rendered' in different ways to call upon one sense or another; a painting (for example) renders a landscape as visual. Likewise, he submits that for a landscape to be rendered aural it would 'have to have been first rendered by a technique of sound art or recording, such that it can be played back within an environment (such as a darkened room) in which we are otherwise deprived of sensory stimulus' (2011: p.136-7). Soundscape, in relation to Whitehead's documentation, continues to seem pertinent because such rendering is exactly what Whitehead and Oliver's recordings do: they section off an aspect of the landscape experience and focus the listener's attention on that aspect.

Ingold's central argument against the concept of soundscape centres on a key contention. Ingold would argue that an analysis of Whitehead's recordings is not so much an analysis of sound itself but, rather, an analysis of the land rendered perceivable through sound. To articulate this position he criticises students of visual culture who, he argues, confuse the eyes as 'instruments of playback' in that they write books 'about the contemplation of images' (2011: p.137) without addressing the eyes as 'organs of observation' (ibid). He argues that when a person looks around on a fine day, they see a landscape bathed in sunlight, not a *lightscape*. Likewise, listening to our surroundings, we do not hear a soundscape: 'For sound, I would argue, is not the object but the medium of our perception. It is what we hear in. Similarly, we do not see light but see in it' (Ingold 2000: p.265). In this sense, sound is the medium that enables us to perceive the world sound us in the same way that it is light that enables us to perceive things.

Ingold's final objection to the concept of soundscape is that, since it is modelled on the concept of landscape, the term places too much emphasis on the surfaces of the world. 'Sound and light, however, are infusions of the medium in which we find our being and through which we move' (2011: p.138). Soundscape, from Ingold's perspective, creates a perception of the environment as

something solid and constant as opposed to the reality which is that everything is in a continual state of flux. Whitehead's recordings however, conform to the kind of fixity that Ingold is concerned with and explore the possibility of multiplicity within this documentary mode.

Along with the development of more sophisticated sound recording technology, ground has been made in regards to developing best practice for the production of soundscapes. There are sound recordists, best known of these is Chris Watson, whose careers centre on finding the best way of recording the sounds that articulate particular locations for nature programmes. Watson's description of his own work is simplified to a short maxim: 'putting the microphone where you can't put your ears' (Crawford, 2013). This is exemplified by his work on a David Attenborough documentary, *Frozen Planet* in the Antarctic in which he used multiple microphones to capture the sound both above and below the ice in order to present a sense of the underwater soundscape. On February 11th 2014 Watson presented his recordings to an audience at the University of Glasgow Concert Hall. The particular material presented at the event was the result of recording underwater over a three year period where he had been pursuing the sound of marine animals, following whales as they migrated from the rough waters around Iceland down the west coast of Scotland, across the Atlantic and finally to the Dominican Republic's Silver Bank. Watson explains

'By using several waterproof microphones, or hydrophones, I can create a surround-sound effect. What you hear when I play it back over speakers is actually better than what you'd hear if you were swimming with the whales. Sound travels better in water than it does in air, and because our ears have a pocket of air built into them the hydrophones are much more direct'

(Watson in Crawford, 2013)

Just as the camera's and techniques used by the f.64 group sought to provide greater visual representation of the land, Watson's equipment and techniques attempt to provide the most accurate and clear aural representation of the land. Central to creating these soundscapes is the understanding that the absence of his own sound from the recordings is key in order to avoid contamination of the sound of the places he is recording. Watson explains how he came to this

realisation through a short anecdote in which he describes standing in his kitchen watching starlings feeding at his bird table in the garden through his kitchen window. The scene before him was muted completely; he could hear nothing of the birds' activity: 'I was watching through a large picture window that gave it a large CinemaScope frame. But it was like watching a silent film' (ibid). In an attempt to rectify the situation, he attached the tape recorder and microphone to the bird table, pressed record and waited. The results were a revelation. Watson felt the resulting recordings were a breakthrough: 'I was just amazed at what I heard. This was the sound of another world. A world where we cannot be because our presence would affect it. All this beautiful, exquisite, fascinating detail came out' (Crawford, 2013). What is clear is that, central to the best practice of landscape recordings, the body of the recordist is not made apparent in the recordings; they should sound as if he is not present. Any kind of speech or commentary is mixed into the recordings at a later time. Other factors that shape best practice include the selecting of the right type of microphone equipment for the specific task, using the right power levels for the recorder, wind protection, filtering, and editing. Proximity, again, plays an important role; it is generally accepted that sound quality improves the closer the person recording can get to the source of the sound they are trying to record, and the demands on the equipment are less relative to how close the person can get their recording equipment to the sound because the sound becomes louder, both in absolute terms (all the captured sound) and also relative to the sound source (the particular sound targeted).

Strikingly, Whitehead breaks many of the fundamental guidelines for best practice in his recordings. During the creative process Whitehead communicates with his collaborator Barnaby Oliver as they exchange performance materials from their individual – yet, coordinated – explorations of rivers on opposite sides of the planet; Whitehead in Wales and Oliver in Australia. Working directly in and from their separate locations they aim to: 'explore the physical space between them through rivers and air and a range of other terrains with their own qualities, such as the web, phone, post, and the less tangible links of memory and synchronicity' (Untitled States, online, n.d). The ways they do this often work directly against principles promoted as best practice

for sound recording, as often the work involves Whitehead strapping microphones to body parts and we hear his clothes and his breath as he explores different locations. This unedited material was shared with each creative partner through the net (RSS, podcast, email) and mail. The final permutation of the material (and some prior versions) are then presented on the Untitled States website for audiences to listen to. *Dulais Wade / Duck* was presented as part of a solo show at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park September – November 2006 and at the Sonic Arts Network Expo in Plymouth July 2007. Recordings of both *Wade* and *Duck* are included on the audio C.D at the back of *Walking to Work*.

Whitehead gives an explanation of his role in making the first of the two recordings, entitled *Wade* (and lasting eighteen minutes and twenty seconds) on the Untitled States website:

Wearing the guitar on my back, microphones on my head and
carrying a mini amp the walk becomes an evolving composition
made by the power of the water, its dialogue with the banks,
trees and bed, and with this man carrying a guitar
(ibid)

As the recording begins, the listener initially hears the sounds made by Whitehead as he walks up the river. There is a steady rhythm of footsteps as they splash in the water. It is possible to discern the changing depth of Whitehead in the water as the tones of his footsteps fluctuate, lighter tones indicate shallower water lower tones indicate deeper. The consistent sound of running water can be heard and this evokes an immersed listening behaviour as the listener begins to feel part of the context while listening. It is evident *we* (the listener and Whitehead) are in a stream. There is the sound of water hitting leaves. It is possible to imagine a forested area. In the background there is the noise of birdsong. These 'natural' sounds, or geophonies, provide an acute sense of place in the imagination.

The onomatopoeic splashes that mark Whitehead's footsteps in the water make it possible to imagine my own feet making the noise in some virtual water. These sounds denote a particular type of interaction from which my own body builds a kind of relationship, when I tap my own foot

the action matches the sound of Whitehead's footsteps. It feels like I am the one who is making the sound of the water. Similar to this, at times the listener can hear the biophone of Whitehead's breath but after a while I imagine that the breath is my breath and the two merge. This physical reaction to the experience of listening is something that Stacy Sewell (2010) explores through a discussion of her reaction to listening to a piece called *Ground Techniques* by Neil Luck:

This work is composed mainly of 'untreated' sounds: recorded, but without further manipulation. The opening section comprises a series of breathing sounds (more specifically, the sounds of the inhalation of breath and the plosive sounds of the release of held breath), that are then imitated by instrumentalists. Listening to this, I found myself feeling tense, holding my own breath

(2010: p.60)

Here, Sewell shows how the sounds she hears impact on her physicality. It is not just possible for certain sounds in Whitehead's recordings to allow for a physical response but goes further to suggest that certain sounds invite such a physical response or interaction.

Then a scratching noise, like a fingernail moving up and down a string of a guitar, becomes apparent. There is the impression of something being dragged. Sporadic notes sound from an electric guitar but there does not seem to be any logical rationale to this which would place the sound either as geophone or biophone. As the structure changes so does the listening behaviour between taxonomic (the attempt to understand the form and structure of what is heard) and figurativisation (the search for a narrative or other imaginative projections). The listener is aware of something out with the natural environment incorporated in it. At 10:50 the screeching stops and it is possible to discern that Whitehead has stopped moving. The noise of his body becomes more pronounced as the listener can hear the sound of a zip on a bag or piece of clothing. Then other piercing noises are introduced, loud electronic sounds like the sharp scratches of a deck akin to rubbing the outside of a balloon. Towards the end of the recording all sound of the environment disappears and is replaced with static. The electronic synth noises become more apparent. An

explanation for this change in tone is given by Whitehead's collaborator on the Untitled States website:

Using the complete, unedited recording, I created several layers of live sound treatments using my Revox reel-to-reel tape recorder. I aim to move with the surroundings, as if treading lightly through the trees, aware of the sound and movement all around

(Untitled States, online, n.d.)

At the very end of the recording the noise of water returns. The final sound is Whitehead's own voice filtered through a heavy reverb; he says 'the battery's run out' and 'recording' which echo and fade until there is no water, static or any sound at all. The soundscape that Whitehead produces is deeply influenced by his interaction with the land. He places himself directly in the landscape and the listener can gain a sense of landscape through his interaction with it. What is presented is the artist's interaction and the audience is left to imagine how whitehead's interaction with his environment produces the sounds the listener is hearing. Whitehead's soundscape helps us think about the significance of the embodied experience within the landscape.

Similar to *Wade*, the second recording involved Whitehead partially submerging himself in the river with his recording equipment. He does not stay in the river beyond the time it takes him to set up the microphones which he will use to record the environment around him. Whitehead explains the process for *Duck* (lasting thirty three minutes and twenty seconds):

I find a place in the bend of the river overhung by the roots of a large ash tree, and duck the neck of the guitar into the river here, covering the machine heads and lower strings. Next I plug in the mini amp: the water resonates through the strings, producing gentle harmonics. I tie the guitar to the tree in this position, balancing the body against the tree with a small stick. The sound is made both by the movement of the water, an occasional gust of wind, and birdsong along with the almost imperceptible movement of the tree. I attach the microphones to small branches and sit on the river bank to listen

(Untitled States, online, n.d.)

As the recording begins the sound of dripping water can be heard. The body in this recording seems still. There are no patterns or indicators that suggest any kind of movement. The sound of dripping is consistent which gives the impression that they are falling in the same place and that the listener is static. Soon the drips begin to fall over the fret board of the guitar and as each drop hits a string the sound of different notes can be heard. This is consistent for quite some time but it is difficult to distinguish whether the sounds are repeating or not. The sound of radio static gets louder. There is a gradual rise in volume and a definite sense of repetition in the sound of dripping water and reverb from the guitar strings. The sound of bird call enters at 8 minutes however, unlike *Wade*, these sounds disrupt the continuity of the sounds that have gone before. The bird call in this instance confuses the images evoked in the imagination rather than articulates them. Consequently, the experience is quite unsettling. *Duck* is a far more difficult soundscape to contextualise; there is less information from which to instruct a sense of what is going on.

The noise of static rises and falls throughout the piece and at times it gives the impression of rain. Then, at 12:50, there is a large guitar strum which lasts around 30 seconds which has quite a jarring effect with the steady reaction of the other sounds and electronic sounds become more frequent. The guitar starts emanating feedback; this is the familiar sound of a microphone when it is turned to face a speaker. The electronic sounds mark Oliver's creative contribution to the soundscape:

Starting with the complete, unedited recording, I add layers of treatments – a mixture of non-realtime digital processing, and live manipulations using my Revox reel-to-reel tape machine and spring reverb. Illuminating and magnifying the harmonic undulations of the guitar, I sink deeper into the sound in meditative stillness

(Untitled States, online, n.d.)

In the final five minutes the reverb sound becomes more consistent and prolonged. A single note gets so loud it blocks out all the other competing sounds. When that dies out the dripping sounds much fainter. The sound fades out and gives the sense that the listener is slowly moving

away from the source. Unlike *Wade* there are no biophones to give the impression of a person directing the movement of the listener; rather it feels like we are floating away. There is a slow fade out and two minutes of silence follows. The listener is left with their own thoughts. Soundscape is a useful term to aid the analysis of recordings like Whitehead's. It offers a conceptual framework from which to categorise what is heard both in terms of different kinds of sounds and the behaviours they inspire.

Although Ingold's objections to the landscape concept seem valid in relation to its use in a more general sense, I agree with his understanding of sound as a medium that enables us to perceive the world around us and that, therefore, Whitehead's recordings are not so much an analysis of sound itself but rather, an analysis of the land rendered perceivable through sound. However, certain elements of Ingold's argument seem less pertinent in relation to Whitehead's documentation. As there is no way of capturing performance, the creation of documents to provide some kind of account of experience is the only method left to the performance maker to retain a lasting impression of the work. From this perspective, the separating out of different sensory elements into sight and sound (images and recordings) is a necessary and legitimate method. Ingold argues that the listener should consider sound as part of a phenomenon of experience – that is, of our immersion in, and coming in line with, the world in which we find ourselves. Whitehead's work seeks exactly this; performances discussed throughout this chapter have addressed the ways that Whitehead attempts to bring his participants into a heightened awareness of their placedness in their environment.

I have also offered the possibility of Whitehead's recordings producing an imaginative interactive environment, with an ability to immerse oneself in the idea of a place and gain a sense of being able to manipulate the surroundings 'as if you were there'. That is not to say that Whitehead's recordings re-create the experience of being in a river or walking in a forest but, rather, they create an entirely new experience from which to build a relationship with an imaginative environment, and

other contextual information serves to build the sense of what that environment is like. Further to this, Ingold's final objection that the concept of soundscape invariably leads to conceptions of land and environment as something that is fixed does not match with my experience. Within the virtual possibilities that Whitehead's soundscapes offer, there is the ability to gain new relationships with the imaginary environment it creates and there are many more possibilities for interaction than there would be in relation to a photograph or a painting. Soundscapes leave space for imaginative and bodily response in a way that other kinds of documentation cannot achieve. These possibilities allow a kind of documentation which does not entirely fix the landscape, this is paradoxical of course because the recording stays the same but there does seem to be many more possibilities for new interaction and imitative relation to the soundscapes. Soundscapes, or at least artistically designed soundscapes like Whitehead and Oliver's, are useful devices for exploring the body in relation to land.

CONCLUSIONS

This analysis has revealed a number of things about Whitehead's documentary strategy. It is clear, for example, that Whitehead employs three main forms of documentation: photographs, drawings and sound recordings. These articulate his performances' ongoing relationship with place in different ways. Conscious that documentation can present both the landscape and performance in ways that are reductive (particularly those which fix the landscape and limit interpretation); his strategy involves a number of approaches which open up the performance, his practice, and the landscape for interpretation. He achieves this by shifting the focus away from trying to present what the performance *looked like* in favour of different kinds of representation which are more suggestive and invite questions and interaction. Some of Whitehead's documentation presents an alternative way of experiencing landscape and his work. What I mean by this is that some documentation is presented in such a way that it allows for different opportunities for performative engagement.

The study also revealed that Whitehead's documentary strategy stays consistent; that the different methods he uses stay the same even as the form and focus of his work develop and change. This seems to affirm the idea that documentation is incorporated into his working practice; it is a part of his process as opposed to something additive or supplementary. This revisits some of the ideas in the framing chapter about the ontological priority of performance; Whitehead's work seems to disrupt this notion completely, favouring instead a paradigm that places documentation as an extension of the live event. All three of the main kinds of documentation – photographs, drawings and recordings – offer fresh opportunities for new experiences and allows the work to be re-contextualised in different spaces and times at the participants' pleasure.

The discussion of Whitehead's performances described how he led participants towards a heightened awareness of their placedness in their environment. A broad overview of his documentary strategy revealed connections to landscape which are continually marked by the relationships between bodies and environments but in a variety of different ways. A number of Whitehead's photographic documents, for example, bring the haptic into play and signal the performative aspect of the landscape experience that moves beyond the purely visual. The concept of haptic visibility becomes a useful framework to reconsider Whitehead's close-up images as sensory experience. Through Whitehead's photographic documentations, the viewer can identify and connect with the natural world on a greater level, enabled by using haptic observation. Many of Whitehead's images are well suited for visually haptic interpretations due to their dynamic texturing and depth. Whitehead's close-ups focus in on particular details of the land and the imprints of interaction. Using haptic visibility as a mode of viewing we gain a sense of touch by viewing what has been touched. The closeness of the land helps to articulate the idea that a landscape is not only something that we see and perceive as we move through it but something that we are intimately involved with through our actions.

Whitehead's drawings and sketches on the other hand evoke a different kind of relationship between performance and landscape. In the study I conceptualise his creative practice as a process of wayfaring as his performances are more concerned with the experience of the land as he observes or interacts with it rather than an attempt to move from one certified position to another. I argue that this preference is reflected in some of his drawings. A broad view shows that his drawings do not fall into a singular, easily defined, category as they encompass a wide variety of subjects. However, some can be read as a kind of choreographic score, a way of showing the flow of his movement in a static form. These more abstract drawings focus more on presenting the linear flow of movement than the physicality of the performer in action. This, of course, aligns the documentation to phenomenologically-inspired conceptions of landscape as they act as a score that both represents and informs movement, implicating both Whitehead and the audience in the landscape (practically or imaginatively).

Lastly, I argue that listening to Whitehead's sound recordings constitutes sound events, which are a sound or a sound sequence understood in its particular spatial and temporal context. The recordings presented with *Walking to Work* present sound that was recorded within the particular timeframe of the performance but which was presented in the present within at home. Whitehead produces his soundscapes by interacting with the land. The microphone is attached to his body so you hear his movement, the listener can hear the artists voice and his breathing, his interaction. The recordings themselves concentrate attention onto the act of listening and without the artist's body (or any other contextual information) to guide the listener; the sound can inspire a more self-reflective relationship to the sound and enable particular bodily reactions only available in this concentrated format. The listener's reactions are based more instinctively and inspire more subjective or personal responses. Whitehead's soundscape helps us think about the significance of the embodied experience within the landscape.

In stark difference to Angus Farquhar and the documentation of NVA's *Speed of Light*, Simon Whitehead presents materials that are more abstract and open to interpretation. Farquhar takes care to provide a personal commentary to the work which explains in the clearest terms his motivations for making the work; each piece is accompanied by its own distinct personal backstory. Even acknowledging the slippages and difficulties with attempting to fix meanings onto landscape performance (difficulties explored in the second chapter of this thesis), Farquhar provides signposts which set out parameters for interpreting the work and influence how we engage with the documentation. Whitehead, on the other hand, offers an assemblage of documentation that takes care to position enough incongruent materials to keep the viewer questioning exactly what it is they are seeing, and allowing him to present his documentary materials in a way that is less prescriptive and defined. This is reflected in the multiplicity of analytical frames I utilise to discuss his photographs, drawings and sound recordings throughout the chapter. Whitehead's approach towards documentation advances the argument that documentation can exist as an artwork in itself, with different audiences from the performance event. New audiences are constituted in different ways depending on the documentation they are engaging with as some of Simon's documentation foregrounds other senses than those that predominated in the 'live' performance. The sound recordings, for example, constitute an audience of listeners rather than an audience of walkers and spectators. Whereas an audience member at the live performance might be asked to row, walk, or howl (for example), the audience member of the audio recordings is asked to participate predominantly through listening. The openness of the documents seem to position the materials as artworks which blur the ontological priority of performance over documentation. These materials are documents of live performances that have already happened but they perform this function almost as a side-effect. The main engagement with these materials is more as artworks which invite the same attention and flexibility as the live events themselves. The sound recordings exemplify this as they require the viewer to become a temporary audience member for a discrete virtual performance.

Key Questions:

What kinds of relationships between landscape, documentation and performance are evoked by Wrights & Sites' *Mis-guide to Anywhere*?

What embodied understandings of landscape can Wrights & Sites' *Mis-guide to Anywhere* be said to provoke?

What strategies have Wrights & Sites used to document their landscape Performance work?

CHAPTER 4

Wrights & Sites and Mis-Guidance

Wrights & Sites are four artist-researchers committed to producing experimental, site-specific work across a range of media. The four core members – Stephen Hodge, Simon Persighetti, Phil Smith and Cathy Turner – formalised as a group in Exeter in 1997. Together they are committed to 'exploring peoples' relationships to places, cities, landscape and walking' (Hodge, 2013). In practice, the group encourage 'disrupted walking strategies' – a phrase that signals their aspiration to transform walking from something that a person might do without much thought into a strategy that may lead the walker to disrupt or challenge conventional uses of space. Walking, then, is an important tool for 'playful debate, collaboration, intervention and spatial meaning-making' (ibid). In other words, walking is foundational in a methodology which brings people together to stimulate and discuss new possibilities regarding understandings and uses of space and place. This chapter will primarily analyse the company's *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* but it will also draw on Phil Smith's project, the *Mythogeography* handbook, to contextualise some of the ideas inherent in the work.

Both Angus Farquhar and Simon Whitehead are the driving forces for their work and documentary outputs so my analysis in chapters two and three examined the relationship between the creators and their documentation. It is clear from my analysis that Farquhar emphasises the importance of his personal narrative in framing NVA's documentary materials. Simon Whitehead, on the other hand, presents his documentary materials in ways that avoid such framing. Each approach

opened the documentation up to different analytical frames. For instance, Farquhar's blog lent itself to discussions of narrative and autobiography whilst Whitehead's close-up images invited discussion of haptic visuality. This chapter presents a different dynamic as there is no single figurehead who drives or directs Wrights & Sites activity. The four core group member's work together to create projects but they also have their own active, independent research and creative trajectories in their explorations of performance and landscape. Signifiers of authorship are deliberately left ambiguous by the group in all of the Wrights & Sites materials so that it is not clear exactly which group member produced which part of the work. This particular attitude towards authorship signals Wrights & Sites desire to shift the emphasis away from themselves and onto the people who are engaging with and participating in their work. Further to this, Wrights & Sites do not entirely follow the other two case studies in presenting documentary materials that relate to live performance events that happened at an earlier point.⁴³ Instead, Wrights & Sites open up a new branch of documentation for consideration. The concept of the *Mis-guide* is central to my ongoing discussion about the potential and limits of documentation to represent or embody certain conceptions of landscape. In this thesis's ongoing investigation into the multiplicity of strategies for documenting landscape performance, the first two case studies evaluated documentary strategies and materials that were primarily artist-led. However, the work of Wrights & Sites offers a counter balance to this and extends the scope of the study to include more participatory strategies. In exploring what ideas of landscape might be produced in Wrights & Sites *Mis-guides*, I am required to analyse not only what exists as paper or digital documentation but the performances and materials I created as a result of interacting with Wrights & Sites' documentary materials.

This chapter will place particular emphasis on Wrights & Sites' *Mis-guides* and in particular A *Mis-guide to Anywhere*, a document of multiple pages which includes directions, images, and written

⁴³ Whilst the status of the *mis-guides* as constituting documentation could be questioned, given that they are intended as instructions or prompts for future activities, my argument is that many of the tasks and invitations presented in the *mis-guides* were first undertaken by the company themselves as part of research projects or presented at conferences before being edited, altered and/or transcribed into the *mis-guide* book.

suggestions that invite the reader to explore landscape through undertaking a number of tasks. A *Mis-guide to Anywhere* is one output produced from continued exploration and creative practice. The first manifestation of the ideas contained within the *Mis-guide* came in a performance project produced for the 2001 Standing Conference of University Drama Departments (SCUDD).⁴⁴ The company devised 4 walks which each lasted for around 30 minutes. The routes for the walks were recorded on postcards that were given to each delegate attending the conference. The postcards were encased inside a map of the city on the back of which was an abstract which explained the project and gave instructions for the participants to follow. The walks varied but some included additional features, such as 'a book to leave messages in, a tour guide, billboard notices, chalked graffiti and telephone interactions' (Hodge, 2008). In this sense, the first version of the *Mis-guide* was facilitated – rather than performed – by the company. However, in a later project, *tEXt & the city* (2002) the company invited shoppers to join them as they staged an intervention in the Princesshay precinct of Exeter. The shoppers were asked to write messages in chalk to friends and relatives (who were not in the city) on paving stones around that particular area. In this case, two company members, Simon Persighetti and Phil Smith, were positioned as both participants and collaborators in the work. In *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* – the piece of work which is central to this chapter – the company include a few descriptive expositions of some creative mis-guidance that they have undertaken themselves prior to writing the *Mis-guide*. They explain:

In researching this book we have explored a number of tactics for transplanting ideas arising from one place to another, including a simultaneous drift by the four core members of Wrights & Sites in four European locations.
(2006: p.16)

On this particular page of the *Mis-guide* they elaborate on how, with the advantage of technology, the group exchanged *Mis-guided* ideas in real-time with people across Europe before

⁴⁴ SCUDD stands for The Standing Conference of University Drama Departments and it represents the interests of Drama, Theatre and Performance in the Higher Education sector.

offering the reader a fresh set of instructions inspired by (but not directly recorded from) their actual experiences. It can therefore be deduced that there is no simple definition of what *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* is as a document or as documentation. Rather, its component parts are elaborate and interwoven: inspired by performances created or undertaken by Wrights & Sites themselves and imagined for future participants. It is certainly a document in that it is a material object composed of pages with words and images on them. It is also documentation in that it offers a record of some of the company's own *Mis-guided* adventures. The results are written suggestions of imagined performances that others might undertake in the future and through which they might gain a similar kind of experience. *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* is the culmination of previous performance projects which Wrights & Sites either facilitated, directly participated or collaborated in, as well as a depository for new ideas and suggestions for new audiences and participants. In other words, *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* is both a document of past performances and/or a script for future enacted or imagined performances.

It is also important to note that each member of Wrights & Sites theorises and writes about mis-guidance from a different perspective. This articulates the multidimensional nature of the practices as the company have consistently avoided single narratives about what the work is, where it comes from and what it might mean. At points where I highlight an idea that is particular to a specific group member, I will signal this distinction in the writing. When discussing Wrights & Sites, it is important not to conflate the ideas of four individual artist/researchers who all use mis-guidance as a launch pad to discuss conceptions of space, place and landscape (amongst other things), and that these ideas do not necessarily coalesce comfortably. Given the flexibility that each company member affords the others in the ways they frame this work, it is clear that there are multiple influences and sensibilities to be accounted for, but also that this is a genre of work which invites fresh interpretations and explorations in its analysis.

Specifically within *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* are a number of pages filled with tasks proposed to potential participants who are invited to use their imaginations in many different ways to reconsider their lived environment. The work begins with an observation about the ways in which people interact with the places where they live, work, regularly visit or otherwise inhabit which, over time, falls into habitual patterns of behaviour which render the landscape invisible (in that the details of the landscape go unnoticed through familiarity). In the *Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), De Certeau discusses how the people who are moving around the city are blind to the paths that they walk in comparison to what he calls the 'immense texturology' generated by the panoptic view from a skyscraper. The person walking in the street is unable to see the big picture. He likens the lines and routes that people walk through the city to the creation of texts – as if the people left lines in their wake like jet streams or the wash from a boat and that those lines through the city constitute a kind of urban poetry. It is the panoptic view from the vantage point of a tall building which makes 'the complexity of the city readable' (De Certeau, 1984 p.93). He states that 'The ordinary practitioners of the city live "down below," below the thresholds at which visibility begins' (ibid, p.93) and that moving away can offer fresh perspectives: 'his elevation transfigures him into a voyeur' (ibid, p.92). However such transformation is at a cost as the voyeur misses the potential richness of the experience of walking in the city, a potential which is not always realised as people become oblivious to their surroundings through habitual use/experience. So the panoptic view might help us to realise the potential but it would not help in stimulating rich tactile experience of being on the streets. This thesis has resisted notions that privilege notions of the landscape as something to be seen, rather than experienced/felt. However, De Certeau's work highlights two things. First that he too theorises the everyday experience of landscape as something which becomes unconscious to the point where people come to 'write urban "text" without being able to read it' (ibid). Secondly, that new conceptions can open up alternative ways of interpreting landscape.

Wrights & Sites create a series of provocations which aim to allow people using the *Mis-guides* to practice seeing and experiencing/feeling their landscape differently. The desire is for the

mis-guidance to act as a catalyst for reawakening the playful, joyful and fresh engagement with place. This starts from a questionable assumption that such kinds of engagement no longer exist or that they are hidden or forgotten about in everyday experience which is, perhaps, a bit unfair. Nevertheless, the tasks within *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* offer a multitude of suggestions that, whilst not formulaic, invite the participant to interact with the landscape in various ways. Tasks may ask the participant to visit, travel, observe whilst others may ask you to do no more than imagine.

This chapter investigates, through practical methods, three separate exercises in *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* in an attempt to use the experience of mis-guidance to rethink landscape, performance and documentation. This work assumes that the *Mis-guide* will be useful for challenging certain assumptions in all three of these areas and their relationship to one another. *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* invites participation in a range of ways so it is logical to approach this analysis through the experience they intend to produce and offer reflections based on the informed position of having undertaken some of them. As a base to work from, I ordered the tasks by how much they ask the participant to do physically in relation to landscape. This was useful as it laid bare a spectrum of anticipated involvement and showed clearly that Wrights & Sites had incorporated imaginative engagement into tasks in a range of different ways. I selected a sample of three, each of which I understood as representing a different point along the spectrum: one which invites a mainly imaginative response with little action, one which invites the participant to travel through landscape and, finally, one which asks the participant to make their own document/documentation to pass on. All of these exercises represent fruitful ground in my attempts to explore the relationship between landscape, performance and documentation.

The tasks I selected were chosen because they articulate the relationship between documentation, performance and landscape in different ways whilst remaining within the existing theoretical frameworks already discussed in the thesis. The primary of these being the conception of landscape as something done as opposed to something observed and articulated in work by, for

example, Tim Ingold and Mike Pearson. Each of the exercises will invite different kinds of participation and will aim to offer different kinds of insight as a result. Mindful of the pitfalls of fitting the practice to suit the theory in ways that present neat and easy findings, I will be careful to critique the romanticising tendencies this work is prone to. Company member, Phil Smith, articulates this pitfall of using this kind of creative work as a subject for research when he states:

Improvisation, spontaneity and adaptation are all crucial elements in them. Issues of self-esteem, embarrassment, satisfaction, and status can also accrue around performance. Adaptations of memory to suit the needs of a creative process pose problems for the assessment of creative outcomes.

(Smith, 2012: p.89)

This quote articulates the main challenges, to not determine neat conclusions before undertaking the tasks or guiding the experience of the task away from its intended focus in order to suit the aims of the research project. For this project to work properly there has to be an appreciation of those less controllable aspects of human experience (like self-esteem, embarrassment, satisfaction, and status) which may work counter to the aims of a research project. I need to be aware of this challenge and be mindful of potential moments of slippage where my experience becomes more motivated by getting the desired outcome than fully giving myself over to the process.

There is an imaginative aspect to the experience of landscape which Wrights & Sites' *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* helps to articulate. This imaginative realm does not solely exist in the mind but we can find material traces of it in locations we know well and in our own bodies through the actions that we commonly associate with certain places. These material traces can be conceptualised as 'documents' which help us to manifest the imaginative in real planes of existence. Through my engagement with the tasks I aim to show how the *Mis-guide* may contribute to opening up new discussions about the relationship(s) between documentation, performance and landscape; and

offer a potential framework for rethinking documentary strategies for more conventional performance.

Before entering into a discussion of my practical engagement with mis-guidance, it will be useful to lay out Wrights & Sites' stated positions on mis-guidance and discuss some of the diverse theoretical frames used to describe it. Wrights & Sites do not accept any conception of space which is singular or finite, instead opting for a more flexible and dynamic understanding which is open and inclusive of multiple possibilities. For Cathy Turner 'each occupation, or traversal, or transgression of space offers a reinterpretation of it, even a rewriting' (Turner, 2004: p.373). This quote articulates what Turner understands of the permeable qualities of space but it also hints at one of the objectives of mis-guidance: the continuous and ever evolving practice of rewriting space through interaction in its many forms. The *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* was made in 2004 and was designed to act as a generic set of provocations that could be transferred to any street, town, city or village, anywhere in the world. The following is an example of the kind of provocation found in the mid-guide:

Most cities are in a constant state of change. This is clearly marked by roadworks as underground services are updated or installed. Such work is generally regarded as an inconvenience. On a *Mis-guided* walk it can be seen in a different light. A hole in the city provides a chance to peer into the historical and geological layers of the place. In this way, you could consider the roadworks as a free open-air exhibition of earthworks and archaeological revelations.

(2006, p.12)

This shows how Wrights & Sites create provocations that are open enough to be applied to a wide range of urban locations. The exercises are generic and do not pertain to particular areas or landmarks but, instead, invite those engaging with them to consider how the exercises can be applied to their immediate or selected surroundings. Turner explains that the *Mis-guide* is 'conceived as the stimulus for a series of actions, or performances, to be created and carried out by

readers, who become walkers in the city's spaces' (2004: p.385). Although the group began with more traditional forms of performance making, Wrights & Sites' work has evolved to a point where they no longer work with performers or play scripts as they are commonly understood;⁴⁵ instead they provide instructions and exercises for anyone who wishes to participate. In *Mythogeography*, Phil Smith's particular methodological approach to mis-guidance, it is explained that: 'the documents... are there to be given life by their readers' (2010: p.9). The performance – such as it is – only comes into existence when they are animated by participants. This does not necessarily mean a physical participation but it also encompasses those explorations that happen purely in the imaginative realm.



(Figure 40. Cover of *A Misguide to Anywhere*, Exeter, Wrights & Sites, 2006)

The *Mis-guide* is unlike any other document that this thesis has explored so far in that it is not a document of a single live event but, rather, is a document outlining a set of principles and

⁴⁵ The misguides are scripts of a sort and their enactors are performers.

ideas for how to conduct a particular type of performance. In attempts to articulate this kind of work Turner draws on performances produced by Mike Pearson and Mike Brookes, and aligns *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* with work like *Polis*⁴⁶ (2001) and *Carrying Lyn*⁴⁷ (2001). Turner aligns the *Mis-guides* to this work because they share a vision of the urban as an unfolding landscape of complexity and contradiction. They also share a propensity to interweave documentation – like recordings, images, drawings, video, Polaroid, audio mini-disk, etc. – with a more discrete kind of performance; one in which the audience or the space is not entirely delineated or stable. Pearson uses Nigel Thrift's description of the ways that people experience the urban environment to suggest that a number of his performances 'are the result of juxtapositions which are, in some sense, dysfunctional, which jar and scrape and rend' (Thrift, 2008: p.209). Thrift's comments imply a particular kind of interaction with the urban environment, one that is possibly antagonistic and certainly not smooth and/or benign. The work of *Wrights & Sites*, whilst connected with Thrift's ideas of the complexities and contradictions of our relationships to the landscapes we inhabit, present, I would suggest, a more romantic interpretation and interaction with the urban environment, evident in the following task:

Arrive as it gets dark. Tell no one that you're coming. Slip
through the streets unnoticed. Sit in the corner of the bar,
watching but unobserved, a stranger in a movie.

Pass under the windows of people you know. Let no one see
you.

(2006, p.54)

The provocation is less antagonistic and more geared towards romantic themes of inspiration, subjectivity, and the importance of the individual within the environment. Some of the tasks present the environment as benign and, in these instances, ignore some of the realities of city dwelling that those familiar with it are often all too aware of. There may be certain times or situations, for example, where the suggestions would take the participant to places that would be scary or dangerous. The task above suggests that the participant walk through streets alone, in the

⁴⁶ For a detailed description of this work see Pearson, 2006: pp.207-213

⁴⁷ For a detailed description of this work see Pearson, 2010: pp.76-79.

dark and without telling anyone. Questions of safety become pertinent here, especially in mind of the different kinds of danger faced by women, ethnic minorities and young or elderly people in the city. Rachel Pain highlights in her paper 'Gender, Race, Age and Fear in the City' that fear of crime significantly impacts the experience of the city. Her work highlights that 'Almost every survey of fear of crime finds that women report being more fearful of crime than men' (2001: p.903). Such findings are not insignificant as they articulate the discrepancy between the romanticised idea of the city which is free from danger present in some tasks and the reality of city living. Wrights & Sites are not unaware of such contradictions and in a task entitled 'Walks for Places of Constraint' they draw attention to it head on:

Walk for women in a place where women don't often walk alone.

You will have your own strategies.

Push to the edge of your comfort zone. Notice, if you reach it, the point at which you no longer feel safe.

Then take one more step.

(2006, p.24)

Nevertheless, it is clear that the *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* includes a number of tasks which romanticise the environment and invite participation without consideration of the implications of the real lived experience.

Wrights & Sites' *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* is a document which falls into a category of performance work where the reading of the tasks and the subsequent practical engagement with them operate on a spectrum of varying levels of performed action, some of which can (as I will argue further later in this thesis) be considered performance events. Both *Carrying Lyn* and *Polis* were works which 'involve the registration, return, assemblage and subsequent projection of video material recorded in the public domain by both performers and spectators' (Pearson, 2010: p.40). These works belong to a distinct area of performance practice which, Turner proposes, 'highlight the

space of documentation as a performance space, since the presentation and interpretation of documentation itself becomes a performance event' (2004: p.377). This idea has been written about extensively by Dee Heddson whose work explores the dynamic relationships between performance, place and documentation and, in particular, about the potential for documentation to be reconstituted in performance and thus complicating the relationship between and definitions of performance and documentation. In her 2002 paper 'Performing the archive: following in the footsteps', Heddson discusses her re-enactment of Mike Pearson's *Bubbling Tom* and attempts to articulate how the documentation from that performance, as it is picked up and repurposed by other writers, might constitute 'another (textual) performance...' and how these documenting/performing activities 'will themselves contribute to the archive of various performances, each going by the name Bubbling Tom.' (ibid: p.67-8). Heddson argues that it is through this continual engagement with materials in new contexts that performance continues, and how documents can become 'some(thing) other (than) performance' (ibid: p.67).

A Mis-guide to Anywhere is central to this thesis because the kinds of performance it provokes always relate in one way or another to a reshaping of our relationship with the landscapes we inhabit. *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* brings together the triad of concerns this thesis is preoccupied with – performance, landscape and documentation – but it does so in a way which alters the mode of analysis as it invites participation or, more specifically, enactment. In effect, the *Mis-guide* is a document which actively invites people to participate in acts of landscaping.

Since the group's foundation, Wright's & Sites have produced outputs in many different forms, including workshops, exhibitions and conferences, as well as papers, articles and publications. Linking all their work is a consistent desire to explore the potential in strategies that shape and re-shape the ways in which we think about the places we inhabit or otherwise experience. Documentation is significant for the group as it is one of the primary methods that the company use to disseminate their strategies to audiences, readers, visitors and even random passers-by. Their

work speaks of a different type of landscape from what has been discussed so far in this thesis in that they are dealing with less tangible planes of experience. Although walking and playing are important components of their strategy, the focus is to get participants to engage with the landscape at a more mythical and fictional level. Their work aligns with the other chapters in this thesis through a commitment to an understanding of landscape as in-process and constantly shifting. They challenge any fixed notion of landscape, the consolidated ideas of what a landscape is or does that are arrived at often as a result of authorised/official representations. Through their commitment to the subjective, personal, and – importantly – fictional realms, the company effectively pursue a campaign of fruitful exploration of possibility, challenging participants to use their imaginations, shift their normal perceptions of place, and open their mind to gain new appreciations of landscape. Turner articulates this when she states ‘our guidebook places the personal, fictional, and mythical on an equal footing with factual, municipal history’ (2004: p.385). As the quote highlights, the group look to disrupt traditional hierarchies of significance which become attached to landscape (consciously through marketed interests such as tourism or for political purpose or unconsciously through habit and repetition). Whilst they do not seek to erase common or officially sanctioned presentations of landscape, they do hope to inspire alternatives and extend the possibilities of what landscapes mean.

POTENTIAL SPACE

A number of related practices/frames appear to have informed the evolution of the *Mis-guides*. I will now articulate some of these ideas, such as ‘potential space’ and mythogeography.⁴⁸ allowing these to be opened out for exploration and tested through practice. To be clear, I am not suggesting that there is a neat lineage or identifiable originary practices in regards to the frames I discuss. As I have already highlighted, Wrights & Sites encourage each member (and those who engage with their work) to let the mis-guidance inspire them to new discoveries through congruence

⁴⁸ Two concepts that I will explain fully later in this chapter.

with a range of theoretical pathways. Although formulated with particular intent (the exploration of the subjective experience of place), the published *Mis-guides* do not usually set out a formal plan of action, 'they rarely even offer a fixed itinerary' (Turner, 2010: p.155). Instead, they hope to expose the 'familiar dramaturgies of space to reconsideration.' That is, that they hope to draw attention to the behavioural habits which render the landscape invisible through familiarity. Turner explains further that they intend to 'draw attention to the everyday ordering, use and narratives of space and the potential for alternatives' (ibid: p.155). Different tasks involve different degrees of physical effort and/or imaginative engagement. Nevertheless, two clear objectives are prompted in each instruction: first, to gain an awareness of space in order to achieve a level of alienation⁴⁹ which helps the participant see the strangeness in the everyday and question habits and practices that are usually done out of instinct. The second, the exploration of 'alternatives', is perhaps more vague, subjective and difficult to describe. It refers to moments of experience when 'potential space' allows a person to blur the lines between inner and outer worlds to achieve new engagements with place. A participant's imagination is an important factor in this latter objective, as it is in 'potential space' that new possibilities are produced through a fictional or mnemonic⁵⁰ engagement.

To articulate this point further, it is necessary to briefly describe the theoretical framework that Turner uses which explains the qualities of 'potential space' and how this is achieved through activities contained in the *Mis-guides*. In 'Palimpsest or potential space? Finding a vocabulary for site-specific performance' (2004) Turner explains how her work with Wrights & Sites has always had theoretical foundations in psychoanalysis and theories of object relations, and that their work draws particular influence from academics such as D.W. Winnicott, Melanie Klein and Marion Milner. Object Relations Theory proposes that the way people relate to others and situations in their adult lives are shaped by family experiences during infancy. Although this might seem a world away from discussions about human interaction with landscape, it does provide the framework for

⁴⁹ A paradoxical alienation – alienation achieved through immersion in landscape

⁵⁰ By mnemonic I mean that the *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* operates as a system that can help the participant to remember certain moments from the past and evoke them in the present.

understanding the kind of imaginative explorations Wrights & Sites hope to provoke through their *Mis-guides*.

Winnicott conceptualises a 'potential space'⁵¹ to describe how creativity develops in a person's early life. She posits that creativity begins in a liminal area between the mother and child, me and not me, imaginary and 'real'. This is a play-space first realised by a child as it begins the process of identifying itself as separate from its mother or, as Turner puts it, 'at the point where the child begins to establish the boundaries of its own subjectivity' (2004: p.379). 'Potential space' is paradoxical – as the child's perception becomes more acute it begins to perceive objects and identities as separate and, yet, it still retains a perception of being merged with the mother so that the child is living in a space which perceives 'inner' and 'outer' worlds simultaneously, different worlds that are never made explicit. The establishment of 'potential space' in early childhood, Winnicott argues, is a necessary process which enables creativity later in adult life. Turner explains: 'Since human beings never complete the process of working out the relationship between what belongs to them and what belongs to the outer world, there is a continuing need for a space of interplay between self and reality' (ibid: p.380). People return to imagination and play in order to explore and come to terms with the world around them.

The concept of 'potential space' is useful as it offers a way of understanding the kinds of imaginative and playful interaction activated by the *Mis-guides* but which also does not lose sight of the reality of the participants' physical environment during that interaction. This is important for Turner as it offers a framework to conceptualise the space created by the *Mis-guide*: 'one need not return to notions of either site or self as fixed or finite entities. One need not imply an unproblematic notion of a located self or a resolution of the tension between conceptual and "real" sites' (Turner, 2004: p.373). If we understand landscape as processual and always in flux – as has been discussed many times throughout the thesis – then this is also true for the more fantastical and

⁵¹ Turner highlights commonly used alternatives as 'intermediate space', 'third space', or 'transitional space' (2004: p.379)

fictional interactions between imagination and environment. Imagination has been incorporated as an important element in the interpretation of landscape performances so far in this thesis; both McAteer's light-trail images and Whitehead's soundscapes are abstract enough to invite a number of individualistic and imaginative responses. 'Potential space' is described as a concept which hopes to encompass the purely imagined alongside possibilities of a more active-imaginative process which involves walking as well as other activities. The main priority set out in the *Mis-guide* is an exploration of the ways that imagination can alter perceptions of landscape in a fluid, constantly shifting way. *Mis-guides* are designed specifically 'to maximise the possibility of creative exchange' (ibid: p.385). Even tasks which do not entail strict physical engagement inspire an interaction with landscape on an imagined level, exposing an infinite amount of possibilities. 'Potential space' offers a lens through which to consider the precariousness of the relations between people and their imaginative exploration of their environment: 'one could also read the *Mis-guide* as an open invitation to reimagine and remake the city while simultaneously discovering it a new: it becomes a 'potential space' (ibid: p.385).

'Potential space' is figured in such a way that 'it places its emphasis on the changes that may be brought about through the creation of new spaces, both imagined and practised' (2004: p.388). Describing the psychological aspects of the *Mis-guide*, Turner explains:

On the one hand the Walker's identity is *merged with* the city, projected through the same imaginative play which allows the city to be introjected in turn. On the other, the walker *emerges from* the city, by discovering the boundaries between real and imagined, familiar and unfamiliar spaces. At the same time, new spaces and spatial relationships are produced by the new and unexpected special practices (games) that are provoked.

(ibid: p.387-388)

All of the above helps articulate the value of 'potential space' in conceptualising the fluidity of perception created by the *Mis-guide*. Although a number of walks deal specifically with this

imaginative re-creation (or recreation) of the city, the *Mis-guide* does not dismiss the possibility or even necessity of historical awareness or political critique. This, again, is where the concept of 'potential space' is useful as it presents a process which allows these things to operate simultaneously and never truly deserting the consciousness of a participant one way or another. The process always involves an awareness of environment alongside the imaginative possibilities that transform it. Turner affirms that 'Winnicott's theories offer a vocabulary, or a conceptual framework, which does seem to contain the paradoxes of site-specific performance without irreversible fragmentation on the one hand, or forced resolution on the other' (2004: p.389). In other words, Winnicott's ideas provide a conceptual architecture that describes a desired balance between the imagined and the reality in flux without one negating the other. As a result, we are able to articulate the complexities of this work which explores what is external to the participant whilst they play at remaking and rewriting it imaginatively. 'Potential Space' helps us understand how a participant may renegotiate their relationship with landscape. *Mis-guides/potential space* offers an interaction with landscape that is both imaginative and material – and alters landscape in the intersection of imagination and physical enactment. Participation in the *Mis-guide* tasks shows how these things are inseparable.

THE POETIC IMAGE

Rather than focusing on the processes that give space for imaginative thoughts to occur, Gaston Bachelard instead focuses on the imagination itself. In *the Poetics of Space* (1964), an outline of which was highlighted in the framing chapter of this thesis (pp.30-33), Bachelard forms a conceptual framework for describing what the imagination is and how it works, centring on the poetic image which he describes as 'a sudden salience on the surface of the psyche' (1964: p.xv). For Bachelard, this means that the imagination is 'a creative faculty of the mind as over against a simple reproduction of perception' (Kaplan, 1972: p.2). His ideas are a reaction against traditional positions of the time that suggested the imagination had a purely imitative function, reproducing images from

past experience. Bachelard instead argues that 'the imagination separates us from the past as well as from reality' (1964: p.viii). The imagination is distinctive from memory in its ability to produce new poetic images. His approach is phenomenological, moving away from observational methods which he favoured in his earlier work as a philosopher of science. He differentiates the work of the phenomenologist from the work of psychologists and psychoanalysts which he says is a 'refusal to obey the immediate dynamics of the image' (ibid: p.ii) or, in other words, the analytical processes involved in psychology and psychoanalysis are not equipped to deal with an investigation of the imagination because in their attempt to contextualise the image, they move the analysis into a language which is fundamentally incompatible with how the imagination actually works:

As for the psychologist, being deafened by the resonances, he keeps trying to describe his feelings. And the psychoanalyst, victim of his method, inevitably intellectualises the image, losing the reverberations in his effort to untangle the skein of his interpretations.

(ibid: p.xxxiv).

For Bachelard, providing a contextual explanation of how images emerge is equivalent to explaining 'the flower by the fertilizer' (ibid: p.xxx). His phenomenology is instead a 'consideration of the onset of the image in an individual consciousness' in order to 'seize its specific reality' (ibid: p.xix). In other words, the best method for understanding the imagination is through a self-reflective consideration of the poetic image as it emerges in consciousness. Throughout *the Poetics of Space* Bachelard explains that these images appear in many ways in his own memories and daydreams and in the work of writers, painters and other artists. Bachelard's description of the poetic image offers a framework for understanding imaginative thoughts in the moments they appear in our consciousness. *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* sets out to stimulate imaginative responses to space. Bachelard's thorough articulation of the poetic image in relation to the intimate spaces of dwelling will help guide the analysis of these imaginative responses away from descriptions of architectural features or objects towards a more complex analysis of the relationship between imagination and space, driven by an immersion in the world as we experience it.

MYTHOGEOGRAPHY

Turner's concept of 'potential space' provides the foundation upon which another central concept – 'mythogeography' – is formed. Mythogeography is when 'potential space' is applied in a chosen context (time and place) and with particular purpose applied to it. In an interview with *Invisible Paris*, Phil Smith explains that 'Mythogeography emphasises the multiple nature of places and ways of celebrating, expressing and weaving them' (Invisible Paris, 2010). The term emerged from his work with Wrights & Sites and their experimentation with *Mis-guides* 'as a term to describe their approach and tactics to sites where multiple meaning had been forced into a single and restricted one, for example, heritage, touristic or leisure sites' (ibid). The so-called purpose of mythogeography is to 'explain, engage and disrupt' places where 'multiple meanings have been squeezed into a single and restricted meaning' (Triarchy Press, 2017). *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* can be read as a 'how to' guide for undertaking acts mythogeographical exploration as each one challenges the participant to question orthodox uses and interpretations of space. Mythogeography celebrates a variable network of artists, teachers, activists and walkers whose practices have, in the last decade, taken up where psychogeography left off.

Psychogeography offers a useful historical anchor for mythogeography and *A Mis-guide to Anywhere*. The origins of psychogeography are predominantly attributed to the work of the avant-garde Situationist International (SI) (1957–1972), a group which emerged from a number of post-war artistic and literary groups under the leadership of Guy Debord and Gil Wolman. They produced a variety of work ranging from films, collages, discussions as well as vast amounts of writing compiled into the twelve issues of their metallic-covered journal *Internationale Situationniste*, 1958–72. An important facet of Situationist thought (and instrumental to understanding psychogeography) was the concept of the *dérive*, put forward in *Theory of Dérive* (1955) by Guy Debord. The *dérive* was a walking strategy employed by the SI. It was a 'crucial research tool in the Situationist paradiscipline of 'psychogeography': the study of the effects of a given environment on the emotions and

behaviour of individuals, as a mode of increasing one's awareness of (specifically urban) surroundings' (Bishop, 2012: p.130). In a report from the 6th of March 1956 Debord states, 'Dérives involve playful-constructive behaviour and awareness of psychogeographical effects, and are thus quite different from the classic notions of journey or stroll' (1958: p.50). This means that, rather than being an end in itself, the *dérive* was 'a form of data-gathering for Situationist 'unitary urbanism', an attempt to undo and move beyond what they saw as the disciplining, homogenising and ultimately dehumanising effect of modernist forms of urban high-rise living' (Bishop, 2012: p.130). There are clear parallels between the two groups, most obvious being their shared objective of disrupting dominant patterns of living and the desire to inspire new engagements with the landscapes.

Psychogeography was part of a method which sought radical change: they did not want to simply reach people on a personal introspective level, instead opting for the rather more ambitious aim of changing societies. Wrights & Sites are operating in vastly different contexts and are removed from the kind of political activism that the SI was propagating. Rather than an objective of changing the fabric of society altogether, mythogeography 'emphasises the multiple nature of places' (Mythogeography, 2017). They view space more 'as a layered entity, and their occupations of it as a form of interpretative spatial practice' (Turner, 2004: p.373). The work of Wrights & Sites is more concerned with celebrating, expressing and negotiating the multiplicity of meanings afforded to places. Whilst Wrights & Sites dedicate their intellectual lineage to SI, it is clear that in the nuances of their work there are fundamental distinctions.

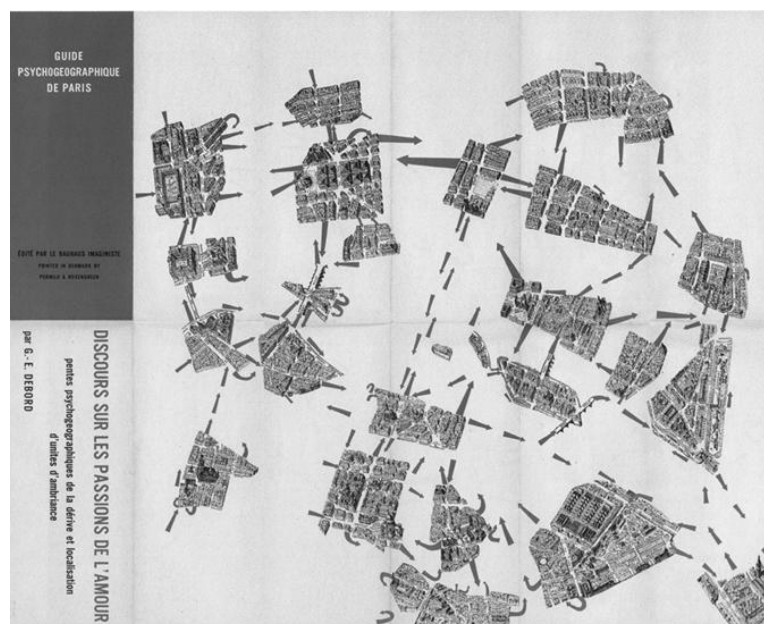
That said, an important area of correlation between SI and Wrights & Sites is in the ways that they communicated and passed on information about their work. Tina Richardson points out in *Inside Out: Contemporary British Psychogeography* (2015), 'There are no rules to doing psychogeography—this is its beauty. However, it is this that makes it hard to pin down in any formalised way' (2015: p.7). SI rarely documented their experimental activities, choosing not to write accounts of the events themselves. Instead, they offered materials which were suggestive for

considering the kinds of activities that SI hoped to inspire and which were less about describing what they had done and more about instructing how others might participate. As Bishop explains further:

Tellingly, it is hard to find informative examples of constructed situations in the I.S.; emphasis is continually placed on the structure and rationale for a situation, rather than reporting specific examples. This aversion to documentation presumably stands as a deliberate ploy to avoid imitation.

(2012: p.147)

Rather than describing their experiments SI would produce provocations. An example of this is Debord's map of Parisian 'unités d'ambiance' dated January 1957. This guide to Paris is presented in such a way that makes it almost useless as a conventional map or record but yet is highly provocative, inviting the viewer to consider their sensitivities to the urban environment. The city is shown as fragmented, joined by blank areas indicated only by the flow of red arrows. It is a document meant for provocation; it invites the viewer to ask questions, and this captures the desires and ideas that the members of the SI were hoping to inspire.



(Figure 41. Psychogeographical Guide to Paris, Paris, Guy Debord, 1957)

This correlates closely with Wrights & Sites and their *Mis-guide to Anywhere* which focuses more on offering provocation which communicates the ideas and principles of play within 'potential space' without actually documenting any examples of such actions being undertaken. Mis-guidance, play and the exploration of landscape is something which is done rather than written about. This is important to highlight because the composition of materials has an impact on attitudes towards it and influences how it will be read. Other guidebooks, for example, present the landscape in much more direct ways through the selection and presentation of landmarks. These materials are composed in such a way that they invite alternative readings. Smith's Mythogeography Manifesto states, 'Mythogeography is an invitation to practise, to share and to connect but also to take the risk of comparison and to practise implicit and explicit criticism of each other's practices and theories' (2010: p.116). In doing so, Smith hopes to extend the reach of Mythogeography through a cross-pollination of ideas and approaches. Rather than guard the ideas and pin down *the* authoritative way of practising Mythogeography, Smith hopes that those involved will be open and trusting enough to share their approaches and develop the practice through generous criticism.

The *Mythogeography* book is a compendium of walking stories, descriptions of hoaxes and digressions, lists, literary jokes, observations and dense passages of prose/poetry-cum-theory. Although *Mythogeography* does not have a single author, the book has entries from many contributors who have conducted mythogeographic experiments and offer reflections on their practice but without necessarily describing what they did. It is assumed that a large proportion of the book's contribution can be attributed to the author of the original manifesto – Smith – but the distinction between one author and another is left deliberately blurry, reflecting the multiple dimensions, interpretations and performances of landscape that Mythogeography generates, and mirrors the approach taken in *A Mis-guide to Anywhere*. In the *Mythogeography* preface it is stated clearly that those involved in creating the book do not consider themselves 'sole representatives of mythogeography' (Smith, 2010: p.11). This description is intentionally slippery and keen to stress that it is only one example in what they claim is a 'vulnerable practice... susceptible to co-option by

adventurous, febrile and risk-taking marketeers as well as by its natural audience among the adrift' (ibid). By which they mean that the practice is open and accessible for all who wish to use it and, he argues, that it lends itself to those who see themselves as adventurous. Like SI, they envisage that the ideas and practices will be adopted, transformed and passed on by those who come into contact with them.

The *Mythogeography* book is itself a kind of map or puzzle. It reads like a fanciful treasure map rather than a strictly geographical or topographical account of space. The book has its own codes and instructions: it is written to be deciphered, learned, and actioned. It challenges conventional linear narrative and classification practices through its coding, inclusion of which forces the reader to jump back to the symbol index before coming to any firm conclusion about what a particular section might say. For example, a passage's meaning is entirely influenced by the inclusion of a 'wormhole' symbol which signifies 'a portal to another place – near or far' (ibid: p.12). The mytho-movement is:

the setting in motion (about each other) of the multiple meaning of any site. Misguidance is the act of revealing, animating or performing these multiplicities by setting them in motion: best when they perform themselves
(ibid, p.169).

Psychogeography aspires to unlock the possibility of configuring a potential-geography - the geography of what might be. It became apparent that there were many people interested in the idea of re-imagining, there was a matrix of explorers and walkers that protected and endorsed the idea, people who uphold the value of the 're-making of space' (ibid, p.112). The daily practice of walking led Smith and other advocates of the Mythogeography movement to acknowledge the ways in which 'walking conjures up other times and places that disrupt any linear flow' (ibid, p.111). It is out of the theoretical context of Mythogeography that Wrights & Sites created their *Mis-guides*, the foundations building from one seminal work in particular: *An Exeter Mis-guide* (2003). *An Exeter Mis-guide* enabled the group to further investigate the tensions between site, landscape and walking. As

a result of growing interest in their practice and documentation from around the world, the company attempted to create a guide which was transferable and not dependent on a specific location:

We started by calling it a 'generic' guide - unusually for us, since we have always been interested in specific localities, rather than 'types' of place. We would not usually consider a work to be 'site-specific' if it could be transferred from its original location. But in this case, the work is completed by the walker and becomes specific to its location only in the walking.

(Persighetti, 2007: p.136)

The collection of influences and theoretical frames that are connected to this work are clearly broad and expansive (and perhaps fittingly disorientating). However, whilst there are a number of ideas which inform the work there are a few key themes which offer a level of commonality: spontaneity, subjectivity, and the relationship between imaginative/ intangible/ fictional understandings of landscape and their physical/lived reality, which remain central in discussions of this work.

Now that I have outlined what the guide is, many of the influences, events and inspirations that led to its creation, and the variety of critical frames that can be applied, this chapter will now move on to a more practical engagement with *A Mis-guide to Anywhere*. The previous chapters in this thesis have explored particular methods of documentation and examined the objects it produced. The analysis has focused on images, recordings, writings, websites and other events and I have attempted to analyse what these might mean for the triad of performance, documentation and landscape. Given that the *Mis-guide* is a series of tasks, it seems appropriate to engage in a practical way by undertaking the tasks in the way they suggest and analysing the experience. This represents a methodological gear change in terms of this thesis as a whole as I shift my focus from particular landscape performance objects inward, to a self-reflective mode of analysis which critiques my own lived experience as I undertook the exercises.

What follows is an exposition of my practical field work and my reflections on it. Working from the sample of three, each of which I understood as representing a different point along the spectrum: one which invites a mainly imaginative response, one which invites the participant to travel through the landscape and, finally, one which asks the participant to make their own document/documentation to pass on. This work involved the 'doing' of the tasks (inclusive of all the specifics that each entailed), a reflection on the process and experience, the transferal of notes and discussions with other participants into a more succinct and focused piece of writing and then a critical analysis of the entire process.

TASK 1

If I say Pascal lived here or Alberti, Bach or Libeskind, see how the constructs of the space change. Watch as the emotional contours are made visible... relocate.

(2006, p.104)

This task asks the participant to consider how their perception and relationship to place alters when they imagine that a significant figure once lived there. Such reflections are necessarily subjective and personal. It calls for a consideration of the ways that imagination forms an important component of our landscape experience. As soon as I began to investigate the relationship between imagination and space, I began to understand how connected memories are to imagination. The sharing of anecdotes or the telling of imaginative stories are important aspects of our experience of place and Wrights & Sites help to draw attention to this.

My own journey into this investigation begins at home. This seems reasonable given the conception of landscape adopted throughout this thesis embraces 'dwelling' as central to the framing of landscape as experiential. My own dwelling place is a semidetached bungalow in the east end of Glasgow. It is not surprising that my home – in the literal sense of the place where I live – becomes a primary focus in this first *Mis-guide* exercise. I am home, at home, in home, as I write this. I have a number of ideas about the place I sit in, the room I inhabit, the place where my wife

Gemma, my springer spaniel Rocco and I stay. This is the street we are on, in the city, country, continent, planet: this is where we are situated: it is where I *am*. Ingold points out that our involvement in space is what informs or produces ideas about it. Usually, these ideas emerge from habitual processes – the things that are done there, the experiences we share. It is also within this world that our involvement in the landscape forms and matures and where the imagination is stimulated to produce ideas about it, ‘for the landscape, to borrow a phrase from Merleau-Ponty, is not so much the object as “the homeland of our thoughts”’ (Ingold, 2000: p.207 emphasis in original). In other words, the landscape is the world we are in as we come to know and experience it. There is no doubt that memory and imagination comprise a significant part of the lived experience as, again, Ingold highlights when he states ‘it is within the context of this attentive involvement in the landscape that the human imagination gets to work in fashioning ideas about it’ (ibid).

Certain common activities render this mnemonic and imaginative aspect of the landscape experience very clear: anecdotal and fictional storytelling and looking through old photographs, to name a few. The *Mis-guide* frequently invites us to think about and enact these activities. And it is with this reflection that I begin my exposition of the task: to reflect on the possibility of reorganising our perception of place through the imaginative processes available to us. Or, what I am calling, the accessing of the imaginative component of landscape.

I have lived in this house for three years now and I have grown acclimatised to it. I have gotten used to its specific noises, shadows and other idiosyncrasies. My imaginative relationship to it manifests itself in many different ways. One of these explores ideas for the future: the changes to the décor that will come to reflect myself and my wife’s personal tastes. We may not be able to make these changes at the moment but the thought of what we might bring to the space and how it will look and feel occupies my imagination and I take enjoyment from such thoughts. Functionality and utility play a part as we work to make our home a sharable space and invite friends and family to stay, to come and spend time with us and, importantly, create happy memories. The future of our

home and environment has continually preoccupied our imaginations. As time has gone on and continues to go by, we gain more experiences and generate more memories that have and will continue to contextualise and inform our relationship with this place. This process is not a stable one – it shifts and evolves over time, changing as I do. This change is not linear, it is not mapped to a simple progression of time because changes occur in a multitude of ways and a person has the capacity to have complex relationships to the space at the one time. *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* highlights this aspect of the lived experience and builds on the simultaneous and ever shifting responses we might have to space by asking the participant to consider further possibilities, to generate more relationships or to alter existing ones. How might imagining a famous person in your house shape your perceptions of that ‘landscape’? How does a document (Wrights & Sites’ *Mis-guide* in particular) create new perceptions of landscape?

What I am concerned with here is the experience of imagining: the looking and seemingly seeing through the geometry of the space to something else, how past/invented realities are made alive in my imagination and how that affects the ways that I interact with landscape. Remembering that the landscape is positioned here not as some solid ‘built’ structure upon which meaning is placed, it would not make sense to think of the *Mis-guide* task as a tool for covering over, or projecting onto, space. Landscape is not some literal reality that is covered in layers upon layers of illusion. It is more about an access to different kinds of experience. As Ingold explains:

Landscape is both – both performative sensorium and site and source of cultural meaning and symbolism: telling a story is not like weaving a tapestry to *cover up* the world ... [landscape] has both transparency and depth: transparency because one can see into it; depth, because the more one looks the further one sees. Far from dressing up a plain reality with layers of metaphor, or representing it, map-like, in the imagination, songs, stories and designs serve to conduct the attention of performers *into* the world... At its most intense, the boundaries between person and place, or between the self and the landscape, dissolve altogether.

(Ingold, 2000: p.56, original emphasis)

Certain activities allow us to access a different plane of reality and reveal the depth of our landscape experiences. Ingold's work attests to the complexity of the experienced landscape and offers a useful metaphor to describe how it functions. For Ingold, the landscape is not an external form but something constituted by experience. Songs, stories, designs and other activities allow us to become part of the landscape and the landscape to become part of us. For Ingold, 'landscape is the world as it is known to those who dwell therein' (2000, p.193) and our imaginative engagement is part of 'the everyday project of dwelling in the world' (ibid, p.191). This resonates in my mind as I think about the importance of imagination in shaping and reshaping my engagement to space. The 'dissolve', as Ingold states, happens in those moments of reflection or in the transferal of memory and imagination from one person to another. The landscape becomes transparent when we tell anecdotes or fictional stories in space, we bear witness to realities that exist in another plane of existence but which is equality of the self and the landscape which are mutually emergent in the telling. In other words, the depth of our experienced landscape becomes apparent in these moments of imagination as such activity renders the physical form of our environment transparent.

TOPOPHILIA

In *The Poetics of Space* (1964) Bachelard guides us through an actual and/or imagined home in a reflection of the experience of imagining. The home for Bachelard has a double function: 'it provides a material and psychological shelter for the imagination of the dweller, but at the same time it becomes itself an essential element of that imagination' (Pint, 2013: p.111). In other words, the house provides a safe place that allows for imaginative thoughts to occur but is also a place which stimulates the imagination in many ways. For Bachelard the poetic images of the house provide a vehicle to analyse the experience of spaces we have intimate knowledge of. The house is 'the topography of our intimate being' (1964: p.xxxvi), by which he means a place where memory, comfort, mysteries and daydreams are exposed, evoked, assembled, retained and called to mind at any moment. Consolidating this, he states:

If I were asked to name the chief benefit of the house, I should say: the house shelters daydreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace.

(ibid: p.6)

Bachelard argues that the house encompasses all the complexity of our experience of dwelling. Centring his analysis on the poetic image, he states: 'we are far removed from any reference to simple geometrical forms' (ibid: p.47). Bachelard's process is an analysis of his immersion in dwelling and, as such, it makes no sense to describe the features of the house or details of its contents. Instead, his work focuses on the actions and thoughts that make up his experience of living at home. It is these things which constitute the real experience of space:

The space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimate of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination.

(ibid: p.xxxii)

Bachelard described his work as a form of topoanalysis as he narrowed the parameters of his study to 'the quite simple images of felicitous space'⁵² (ibid: p.xxxv). Topophilia is the positive affective link established between people and their material surroundings. This concentration on the romanticised house of positive experience negates the many instances where the home is not a positive place or associated with positive memories or experiences. González (2005) coins the term topophobia to explore the opposite relationships to space that Bachelard is interested in. The images of felicitous space that Bachelard explores throughout *the Poetics of Space* range from the primitive hut to attics and cellars, drawers and wardrobes, corners and miniatures, as well as images of animal dwellings like nests and shells.

In a chapter entitled 'House and Universe,' Bachelard explains how the mechanical activity of housework is constituted as creative in the imagination. He describes how the love and care that a

⁵² Bachelard's ideas have been critiqued (Heynen: 1999); particularly his conception of felicitous space which it is argued represents nostalgic, outdated and idealistic conceptions of the lived environment given its emphasis on traditional cottages in rural settings and his resistance to modern city dwellings. His choice to focus on the old house as 'a great image of lost intimacy' (ibid: p.100) made his work seem antiquated even when it was first published in 1957.

person takes over their home and its contents has a transformative potential, that it makes the house anew: 'a house that shines from the care it receives appears to have been rebuilt from the inside; it is as though it were new inside' (1964, p.68). Bachelard articulates this point through an analysis of a passage from Henri Bosco's *Le jardin d'Hyacinthe* (Hyacinth's Garden) in which the writer describes the effect of waxing a hundred year old sapwood tray and describes how the action 'was creation of an object, a real act of faith, taking place before my enchanted eyes' (1946: p.192) or, in other words, the act of cleaning, in transforming the tray from something old looking to something new looking, was creating a new object in the mind of the person cleaning. Bachelard also recalls a novel by a lesser known and unnamed Italian writer in which a street sweeper, as he 'swung his broom with the majestic gesture of a reaper' (1964, p.68) daydreamed that he was reaping an imaginary field. In this instance it is the action of swinging the broom itself that enables a reimagining of the space, that transforms the street into 'an imaginary field on the asphalt, a wide field in real nature in which he recaptured his youth and the noble calling of reaper under the rising sun' (ibid, p.69). Both the polishing of furniture and the sweeping of streets evokes new poetic images that shape the relationship to space. He states:

When a dreamer can reconstruct the world from an object that
he transforms magically through his care of it, we become
convinced that everything in the life of a poet is germinal.
(ibid, p.70)

For Bachelard, the act of cleaning as described in the writing of Bosco and the unnamed Italian, elevates certain spaces in the mind of the dweller to 'produce a new reality of being' (ibid, p.68). He states further, 'from one object in a room to another, housewifely care weaves the ties that unite a very ancient past to the new epoch. The housewife awakens furniture that was asleep' (ibid). Aside from the sexist framing of his point, it does articulate the relationship between the imagination and space as mutually emergent in our actions and experience. This kind of imaginative activity is fundamental to our lived experience and is evidenced in the many instances where this kind of activity already happens in our own day-to-day habitual practices. Bachelard articulates how

memories and imaginative responses are stimulated through interaction with the objects and actions of the household. Cleaning, moving furniture, and handling objects are all intimately linked with imaginative thoughts which accompany them. *Wrights & Sites' Mis-guide to Anywhere* invites us to continuously reflect on the poetic relationship between action, imagination and dwelling. Their work is also an attempt to breathe new life into the spaces we inhabit through an imaginative engagement.

Memories and imaginative images connected to space are also stimulated through our interactions with other people. The sensation of the anecdotal closely resembles the relationship between imagination and the incidental and intimate engagements with space that Bachelard focuses on. The sharing of stories about the home has the same potential to evoke new poetic images in the mind and stimulate new imaginative relationships with the space. My own strange example involves Gemma's Uncle Jim who used to live in the same house where we live now, only fifty years ago when he was a child. When he visits he tells stories of his experience growing up in our house and this has an impact on how I perceive our home. This experience of Jim sharing his memories and Gemma and I sharing ours of a place that is home to each of us highlights the kind of 'relocation' that Wrights & Sites allude to in their *Mis-guide* task. Jim's anecdotes give access to a whole realm of memory and belonging that I would never have had otherwise. Of course, these memories are not our own and that is where the imagination is called upon to produce these images. The fragments of detail from Jim's stories connect us to a memory and experience that constitute the place in an old/new way. There are particular examples of this: our office space was Jim's bedroom (for example), our fireplace is the same fireplace where he hung his stockings at Christmas. We are also linked through shared activities and experiences; I am cutting the same grass, planting flowers in the same patch. We are linked through the knowledge that we are in some way repeating things that have happened in the landscape for over 50 years. Again, the stories and anecdotes render the landscape transparent and reveal the depth of our experienced landscape.

Just as it is possible to imagine Jim in our house, it is similarly possible to imagine a famous Glaswegian comedian like Billy Connolly, for example, visiting my house. This imagining has a similar ability to impact on my perception of my home. Connolly is a surrogate here for the imagined figures suggested in the task description: Alberti, Bach or Libeskind. The point of the task is not specifically about how these particular historical figures impact on perceptions of space but, rather, how space is changed through imaginative processes more generally. Connolly provides a stronger emotive and imaginative connection in my mind and offers a more relatable example as a result. There is enjoyment to be had in the imagining of a visit from one of Scotland's best loved public figures. I can picture him sitting on my sofa with his big banana shoes on, drinking tea and telling jokes, and this sensation is pleasurable. Telling a fictional story about a known person visiting my house presents a plausible scenario that 'could have happened' and awakens that potential in my imagination.

From fictional stories to fictional characters: just as it is possible to create imaginative scenarios of historical or famous characters in your home, the same is true for fictional characters like Sherlock Holmes or the Avengers etc. This imagining of fictitious characters is not something separate from our experience of place but is a component of it. For example, when my ten year old brother comes to visit me for the weekend, I am responsible for looking after him, making him feel comfortable and at home in my home. I have to find ways to keep him entertained and one of the strategies I do for this is tell him stories. This is not to deceive him by suggesting that such stories actually happened, at ten he understands that the story is for him to enjoy rather than to believe. I have told many stories including the time when Animal from the Muppets needed to borrow my drumsticks and the chaos caused by Iron Man when he came for dinner. This experience of sharing fictional stories demonstrates how our minds have the capacity to unlock that imaginative connection with the space. Such imaginative moments shape my landscape experience in that they remove me from the fairly mundane perceptions of space and replace them with truly spectacular ones. In imagining Iron Man in my home I open my experience up to different quality of perception, one which is guided by the desire to entertain rather than to represent a perceived 'reality'. One of

the key findings of this task is that there are in fact many contrasting, converging and competing realities that exist simultaneously and come into focus when the imagination calls for it. The mind plays an important role in how you perceive space and telling stories is an important facet within the whole landscape experience.

The Wrights & Sites *Mis-guide* task offers a pathway for thinking about the imaginative component of the landscape experience. It does this by asking us to imagine a fictional or historical character used to live in a particular place – my home, in my case. From my reflections of this task it seems clear that landscape performance, or acts of landscaping, have to include acts of remembering and imagining. This task led to a consideration and an enactment of those kinds of imaginative performances. It invited me to think about the kinds of performance that are common to our everyday lives, to act in certain ways that are connected to the ways that we behave, that stress this imaginative component to the landscape experience. The *Mis-guide* plays on those ideas and themes as they ask us to focus on this aspect of the experience and to stimulate it. The document is the exercise itself – the page, the words. But what it documents is the idea that imagination is important to our experience with/of place.

TASK 2

Return to your hometown, perhaps with a childhood friend, visit old haunts, houses, streets, schools, playgrounds, secret dens and retrace old walks. Return to the city where you now live and use your hometown experience to discover new ways of walking in the city, new places to hang out in.

(2006, p.80)

Whilst the first *Mis-guide* task explored in this chapter focused on the home and the imaginative possibilities therein, the second task extends the scope of the study to hometown and calls for an investigation of landscape through the lens of prior experiences. It then calls for the participant to transpose those remembered experiences onto another place. To undertake this work

is to embark on discovery of your own autotopography, a neologism coined by Dee Heddon⁵³ in her book *Autobiography and Performance* (2008). Autotopography is the interweaving of autobiography and place which appears in multitudinous forms. As a form of performance in particular, it pertains to a strand of site-specific work in which the audience is guided by the maker to the personal spaces where the stories being told actually took place. The performances described by Heddon as autotopographic utilise storytelling for audiences present at the site, intertwining personal and local remembrances and narratives. For Heddon, 'an autotopographic practice brings into view the "self" that plots place and that plots self in place, admitting (and indeed actively embracing) the subjectivity and inevitable partiality or bias of that process' (2008, p.92). In an earlier paper, Heddon uses the term 'to signal more specifically the location of a particular individual in actual space, a locatedness that has implications for both subject and place' (Heddon, 2002). Whilst the Wrights & Sites task does not entail the inclusion of an audience in a traditional sense, the partner accompanying the participant on the task becomes both co-performer and audience to more discrete performances as one partner is inspired to tell the other stories during the journey. Memory and imagination remain key features in both the practice and the analysis of this work as the conception of experiences of past as 'ghosts' inherent in the architectures of the present (in all different kinds of forms) remains useful.

This second exercise required more active fieldwork as the participant is asked to leave the confines of their home to walk around their hometown with a friend. There is something significant about the addition of another participant in this task and the requirement that the visit is undertaken in the company of someone else, particularly someone who was there with you during the times you are being asked to remember. As the previous *Mis-guide* task was so introspective and my own lived experience the primary focus for analysis, it is useful to incorporate a task that articulates how our lived experiences are often shared by other people. This *Mis-guide* task forces us

⁵³ Autotopography was originally coined by Jennifer A. Gonzalez and refers to 'a spatial, local, and situational "writing" of the self's life in visual art' (Smith & Watson, 2001: p.45). However, Heddon uses the term more literally as the writing of place. Heddon's use of the term is more useful in the particular context I discuss.

to consider the impact that other people have had in the construction of our childhood landscape and the ways that this imagined landscape can infiltrate and impact on our experiences of the landscapes in which we currently reside. As we are asked to consider the ways that our past nostalgic landscapes are transposed onto another, imposing a memory map of one place on to another. If our experience of place resides in the body (at least in part) then is it not true that we take our landscapes with us when we move, the influence of one place is clear on another.

PART 1 – HAMILTON

For this task I invited my neighbour of eight years, childhood friend and best man – Bob – to accompany me back to our hometown of Hamilton in South Lanarkshire one windy day in February, 2017. The day began with an explanation to Bob of the work that Wrights & Sites make and a reading of the exercise. We then proceeded to walk around Hamilton from 9am until 7pm talking about our experience of growing up in the town. We also gravitated towards a number of different areas, stopped many times in a variety of locations and recounted stories, reflecting on certain things that a particular spot evoked. Mindful of the focus on documentation in this thesis, we also made a conscious effort to think about and discuss the ways that we had contributed to a documentation of the city or the ways in which the town itself provided documentation of our landscape performances. That is, the ways that our actions had directly impacted the physical make-up of the environment or where there were markings that *could have been us* brought to mind memories. There were many points during our journey where we see evidence of our past action, the sagging wire of a fence that has been jumped over/on repeatedly over years, for example. We would also take detours specifically to rediscover and present some past document that was tucked away (a note proclaiming *we are KINGS* written in black marker pen on a floor-level brick at the far end of what used to be the only basketball court of the sports complex but which is now another five-a-side pitch). Throughout the day I took the opportunity to document our journey with a number of recordings taken with my dictaphone and pictures with my camera. Memory and imagination again

becomes the key prism through which this *Mis-guide* task will be analysed. Here, I position the stimulation of memory and imagination – via walking, looking, touching, photographing – as acts of landscaping.

From the beginning, the task required Bob and me to ask pragmatic questions about our hometown and our experience in it:

- Where did we go?
- What did we do?
- What can we remember?
- What was its impact?
- Why did we come here?
- How has it changed?

There is a large area to cover: Hamilton is the fourth largest town in Scotland, there are around 50,000 people who live there and during the years that were spent growing up there we occupied many spaces. The first decision that had to be made before the task began was what places were important enough to visit. The inclusion of a partner in this task informed our methodology in the decision-making process to a process of discussion and compromise. The main qualification of our selections was that we both had to have spent time there but also that we both had to find the suggestions significant enough to have lasting memories of the events and moments that happened there. What this means is that there had to be a shared agreement about where the boundaries and limits of what we call our 'hometown' actually were. Although our homes growing up were situated in Hamilton and the primary space where we spent our time fell within the boundaries drawn on a map that distinguishes Hamilton from the other towns around it (like Blantyre, Motherwell, Larkhall, Bothwell, East Kilbride etc), what we discovered was that the concept of hometown was not limited to these borders but was far more porous as we moved up and across those boundaries into other territory which, whilst not necessarily being Hamilton anymore, still constituted hometown in our minds as it shared the same status as other places where we spent our adolescence. Our decisions

were not decided by arbitrary lines drawn on a map but by the places where we regularly visited and travelled and the places we claimed as our own.

We organise the landscape via a number of relational hierarchies. We order significances depending on who we are with at any given time. Memories are shared as much as spaces so parts of the town that are significant to Bob and me will probably be quite different to the places that are significant to me and my mum, for example. So, when having to make a decision of what parts of the town are the most important to visit, the answer will alter depending on who you are with, at what time and for what purpose. It is also possible (likely, even) to share more than one relationship with more than one person in any selected place and to have built up a bank of memories with a range of people that are important (or not) for a variety of different reasons. One relationship with space does not exclude another. These different registers are not competing but exist in a milieu of potential memories and relations, ready to be called upon as the mind and occasion requires. The *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* draws attention to the complexity and messiness, drawing attention to the ways that our experience of landscape is one based on personal memory, relationships, and transactions which form multiple, over-lapping, contradictory renditions.

The *Mis-guide* (unsurprisingly given the name) is an alternative to typical tour guides and therefore aims to direct the participant in alternative directions. Having selected Bob to undertake this task with, the places that we gravitated towards were locations we spent a lot of time in during our school years. Hamilton is a congested town, filled with people. Out of the house and out of the way of their parents, what many teenagers want is private space to go to places where they do not feel like they are being watched. Being a young person in Hamilton involved extended periods of time in which the only objective was to pursue new opportunities for entertainment. Exploring and wandering were common past times for those of us with little income and as such many of the common spaces where we would spend most of our time (and where you may expect to find teenagers – sports complex, playing fields, fast-food restaurants etc.) were spaces we often used as

a sort of 'base-camp' from which we would set out for new discoveries – hidden spaces were discovered and claimed around those popular areas either by chance or because we went looking for them.

During our *Mis-guide* walk around Hamilton, Bob led us to just such a spot. It is a grassy pathway running behind Homebase's outdoor garden section. It is an area used for a number of illicit activities and is a well-chosen location for such purposes. Residing in the far corner of the park, it is far enough from the shops or the football pitches to reduce random wanderings; the spot itself is off the concrete pavement laid out for those who move in this general direction; ironically, it is the kind of spot that people would not choose to travel down precisely because it looks like the kind of place that people might go for privacy. After guiding us up the path, Bob shared a story of how he thought of this spot as a 'hidden hideaway'. This was one of the locations he and a few classmates used to escape any unwanted attention from authority in order to drink whilst under the age to do so. As we wander down what is now a pretty open space we discover evidence that this is still a popular spot for such activity as a number of empty bottles of alcohol are half buried in the foliage – much like the teenagers who drank them. There is a muted rebelliousness in the way in which these relics are hidden that seems to personify the story, not tossed to the surface of the grass so carelessly that the perpetrator clearly did not care at all but placed into the bushes as if organising ornaments on a shelf. Clearly, these objects are not hidden enough that it is impossible to rediscover at a later date. We discuss this point and suggest that there may be a pride involved in such displays; if the task is to erase the evidence then the best available option would be one of the large bins situated less than a hundred yards from the point at which we are speaking. Instead, these bottles and cans are placed as markers that such activity happens in that place, they are documents of a particular type of performance of/in landscape – drinking. They are warning signs that this is a private space reserved for people of a certain age range and for certain types of illicit activity and that people who are uncomfortable with that should stay clear. Or possibly trophies that a rite of passage has occurred –

Bob confesses that he was quite proud to have had such experiences in that place as a teenager and remains retrospectively proud of his rebelliousness in the present.

Bob: 'I remember coming down to this part of the Palace Grounds, when? ...I must have been 14 – 15, maybe... It was my first taste of drinking out in the park. It was me Boydie, Chelsea and a bottle of White Lightning. I think we came in maybe twenty yards (I don't think we even made it round the side of the bush there). I was probably the most nervous. I kept looking around thinking constantly that I was going to get busted but it was pretty safe down here.'



(Figure 42. 'Secret' lane in the Palace Grounds, Hamilton, Andrew Henry, 2017)

This exchange can be viewed as a kind of autotopographic performance. Bob's story intertwined personal and local remembrances at the site where they happened. However, this was a more discrete kind of autotopographical performance. This work is not for an invited audience with a number of expectations of seeing a 'show' but, rather, an intimate, purposeful performance wherein the close friend accompanying the participant becomes both co-performer with and audience to the other. Yet, there are a number of similarities in the two events. Both involved intimate knowledge of the places that were being visited. Both were a kind of re-performance, a (re)presentation of the past in the present.

What is also clear from this exchange is that place is a trigger for memories – the significances that we forgot about. The town is littered with all kinds of incidental and deliberate

markings from my adolescent landscape, such as the thrown/placed bottles in the shrubbery. These artefacts may not be my own – they may not have been produced/placed there by me specifically – however they are objects which trigger memories and ideas. They signify the reality of my imagined experiences; they remind me that these things did and still do happen. They function as documents – triggering memories of past performance and a performance of landscape as somewhere where I could behave out-with adult control. De Certeau seems to affirm this when he states:

It is true that the operations of walking on can be traced on city maps in such a way as to transcribe their paths (here well-trodden, there very faint) and their trajectories (going this way and not that). But these thick or thin curves only refer, like words, to the absence of what has passed by...

(De Certeau, 1984: p.97)

The land is a document of performance and our footprints are a score. From the *Mis-guide* experience this seems true both in the realities of seeing the marks of human interaction on the land as well as in the imaginative realm of the landscape experience. Given the ease with which past memories are cast to the forefront of our mind as we wander the paths around the ground, it seems that the marks of place are not only etched in the surfaces of the terrain but also deep in our memory, ready to appear at the slightest provocation. This seemed especially true when Bob and I stood at the gates of both our primary schools Chatelherault and Woodside (each at separate ends of Silvertonhill Avenue in the south east of the town) and both of the old buildings had been knocked down and replaced with new architectures. Regardless of the change the traces of our past trajectories in those schools still lingered in the mind's eye and could be found again when we looked towards the spots where they once would have taken place.

Nostalgia plays an important role in how we retrospectively attach meanings to certain locations. In hindsight we can ascribe meaning to places that we did not think about consciously at the time. As Heddon notes:

it is the memories of a place that perform the lure of the local, serving to remind us where we have been and what we have done, which in turn brings us back to a sense, not of place, but of ourselves. Though nostalgia no longer refers solely to place, the return home remains a nostalgic gesture.

(2007, pp.95-96)

The landscape as it is experienced in the then and in the now is conditioned by imagination and memory. By revisiting these locations with a friend it helps to realise the importance of childhood experiences in shaping your understanding of landscape in the present. Whilst we can talk of the experience of specific acts which happened there and describe the tactility of those experiences – the feeling of getting wet feet by walking on the grass, or listening out for other people and only hearing the rustle of the greenery (which helps refine our understanding of this landscape in terms of the physical relationship to it) – it is also true that these things connect you to another plane of existence which is inseparable from the physical/tactile and that is the imaginative. Imagination operates on a tangible and real plane of experience – just as real as the physical.



(Figure 43. The wide steps off of Castle Street, Hamilton, Andrew Henry, 2017)

What – A nostalgic retelling of an important moment.

Where – The ‘wide’ and ‘steep steps’ off Castle Street

Andy: We used to cycle a lot. Me and you in particular. Even before we went up to secondary school it was one of the things we did. It was just like, get on the bikes and let’s go. Me on a BMX and you on a proper mountain bike. As in, you could probably have gone up Everest on that thing. It was legit. And we did spend a lot of time changing the chains and replacing the tires. I remember you doing a lot of that and I just watched. I was pretty useless at it. We did a lot of maintenance.

Bob: Yeah that was our thing to get stuck in to.

Andy: I remember distinctly cycling down at a million miles an hour/

Bob: /stairs at ASDA/

Andy: /the stairs at ASDA.

Bob: That’s why the bikes needed maintenance. Because we kept doing things like that.

Andy: But the first time we did it, it was like a big thing for us because we used to ask each other ‘do you think we might... do you think we might do the stairs!?’ I mean we talked about it loads before doing it.

Bob: I’ll tell you how I remember it. I remember I used to cycle around with Mike and Ross and it was common for me to cycle down the wide stairs, the ones at the very top. And I remember talking to you about this. And so I remember I went down it when you and me were cycling – just the top ones. And I remember that we spoke about it before and I said to you ‘mon down these ones’ so we went down those ones at the top and then you decided to take the next level... Like ‘screw it, straight down them all’ And the second set were way more intense. That’s how I remember it. I saw that you didn’t die so I was like ‘well, I can do it’

Andy: I mean, the crazy thing was that I was doing it on a BMX! You could have sailed down, you could have gone down backwards and it wouldn’t have been a problem! But I then remember many many times after that feeling like utter bosses because instead of stopping we would just pelt right down Castle Street, right down the wide steps, right down the steep ones. A hundred mile an hour hooligans. It was a rite of passage.

Bob: From the top of Hamilton as well, right down.

Andy: I recon if we were standing here right now and two young kids came flying down here on a BMX and a mountain bike and just absolutely took those stairs, I would still think that was pretty cool. Like, ‘look at these young guys’.

What became evident during the course of our journey was that the kinds of memories we spoke about generally revolved around a number of common threads, such as exploration, experimentation, freedom, testing our limits, ethics, and relationships. These themes, often associated with coming-of-age stories, connected all the places together but it was unclear whether we were fitting our stories into those narratives archetypes or whether the archetypes had conditioned our experiences during the time. Even recognising the unstable nature of these retellings, the stories constitute performed documents which transfer information about the landscape of our childhood. Whilst this nostalgic past is mostly hidden from view (with the few odd exceptions like beer bottles or graffiti) that particular quality of landscape is brought to the surface in the retelling and made present in our minds. What was also clear was that there were many stories connected to these places that moved beyond what we did there – in terms of activities like playing basketball, running around a tunnel mouth, sitting on a stone lion at the mausoleum, hitting golf balls across the pitches, etc. – towards what those activities meant for us at the specific age that we were at the time, how certain action-in-place became significant to us as symbolic markers of instances that disrupted or reinforced ideas about ourselves. Bob's story about drinking White Lightning in the bushes helps to show that we used this space as a means to test the boundaries of acceptability in our adolescence, when we were asking what we were allowed to do, what the boundaries were. These spaces offered opportunities to test the literal boundaries of our landscape.



(Figure 44. Tunnel mouth for the Hamilton to Motherwell underpass, Hamilton, Andrew Henry, 2017)

PERFORMING THE NOSTALGIC LANDSCAPE

It is evident upon reflection of my *Mis-guide* experience with Bob that our reflections on our hometown primarily took shape in two formats: retellings via anecdotes and stories, and re-enactments via the embodiment of certain actions and activities that we could remember doing when we were younger. Both the retelling and re-enactments were performative. This closely relates to Rebecca Schneider and Diana Taylor's work on re-enactment as a form of documentation, that performing is a way to preserve and communicate information.⁵⁴ In these moments of re-enactment our bodies are intimately linked with the place and our memories of it. Schneider contends that performance resides in the body; it does not die or disappear once a performance finishes. Rather, we might 'approach performance not as that which disappears, but as both the *act* of remaining and a means of re-appearance and "reparticipation"...' (2011: p.101). In this sense, performance always has the possibility of remaining through repetition – if a song is whistled 200 years ago and the same rising and falling cadences remain over that time, even if they change, the 'essence' of that tune remains – it is an echo of the original. Ephemerality transcends time through living bodies or, as Taylor states 'Embodied and performed acts generate, record, and transmit knowledge' (2003: p.21).

Schneider explains that embodied modes of documenting may include orature, storytelling, visitation, improvisation, or embodied ritual practice as history. One particular example is that of the American Civil War re-enactors who 'consider performance as precisely a way of keeping memory alive – making sure it does not disappear' (2011: p.100). I would argue that skimming and throwing stones in the water as we once did can be seen as a way for us to keep those memories alive. The action tells us something about our ability to use the relationship between body and place to retain a sense of identity within the landscape. Details of the place – like the stones on the bank and the buoy out on the water – can be seen as a score which guides us to a repertoire of actions which, in

⁵⁴ which I set out in the framing chapter of this thesis, see 'Archive and Repertoire' pp.56-60

turn, ties us to a whole collection of memories. Our ability to talk about a particular landscape from an informed position comes from the knowledge we gained and the experiences we used to have. Building on these ideas Diana Taylor states that this form of remembering requires presence: 'people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by "being there," being a part of the transmission' (Taylor, 2003: p.20). The throwing of stones was a re-enactment in a literal sense as we were doing again what we once did as teenagers. This included both the physical actions involved in throwing the stones but, as we discovered, it also meant revisiting old thought processes, old ideas and miscalculations. We re-enacted our competitiveness and our ineptitude. On reflection, the lines between performance, landscape and documentation blurred in that moment. As we re-enacted our adolescent experiences, it simultaneously affirmed our connection with that particular place, making real and tangible in the present what had become a memory of the past. The throwing of stones triggered a performance that was almost identical to those we had as teenagers, almost as if we were following the steps of a score. We were linked to our past in the action of picking up the stones, throwing them, and failing to hit the buoy. Location is synonymous with that behaviour and the memories associated with it. The whole experience can be viewed as an access point to a past relationship to the landscape – an experiential document of both memory and landscape. What the landscape is for me is entirely bound up with the memory and re-enactment of those past performances. This is the primary finding that emerged from my enacting Wrights & Sites'

performance

document.



(Figure 45. Picking up stones at Strathclyde Park, Motherwell, Andrew Henry, 2017)

Andy: So we are at Strathclyde Park the Hamilton side, at the loch... Is it a loch? A reservoir? I dunno. I distinctly remember coming here and throwing stones at the buoy to see if we could reach it. We always ended up having so many conversations about best form and practice about how a person should throw a stone.

Bob: Yeah, we would try the skimming-stone thing but it always just came back to just brute force. Who could throw the furthest?

Andy: I don't think I ever managed to reach the buoy, itself. And even if I got close I don't think I was ever anywhere near it in terms of aim. From what I remember it always seemed much closer than it actually is.

Bob: I am standing here looking at it right now thinking that I can *definitely* hit that.

Andy: So, you know what we are going to have to do then, right?



(Figure 46. Strathclyde Park water sports observation tower, Motherwell, Andrew Henry, 2017)



(Figure 47. Strathclyde Park orange buoy, Motherwell, Andrew Henry, 2017)



(Figure 48. Bob throwing a stone at the buoy in Strathclyde Park, Motherwell, Andrew Henry, 2017)

(Figure 49. Andrew throwing a stone at the buoy in Strathclyde Park, Motherwell, Andrew Henry, 2017)

Andy: So, that was exactly how I remember it.

Bob: Exactly.

Andy: Tried to throw the stones in.

Bob: Nowhere near it.

Andy: You think that it is much much closer than it actually is. We gave ourselves 3 chances and we got nowhere near.

Bob: Managed to get just about halfway at one point but even then it was way to the side.

Andy: I remember spending hours down here throwing stones trying to hit that thing. You know, even 10-15 years later I still thought 'That's easy'.

Bob: I remember throwing stones at it and I don't remember not hitting it but I don't remember hitting it either. But, there just now, I was like 'yeah, of course I can hit that!' And here we are again. So... the cycle repeats itself.

Andy: Yeah, you do it again after all these years and you realise it is exactly the same – you're still nowhere near it.

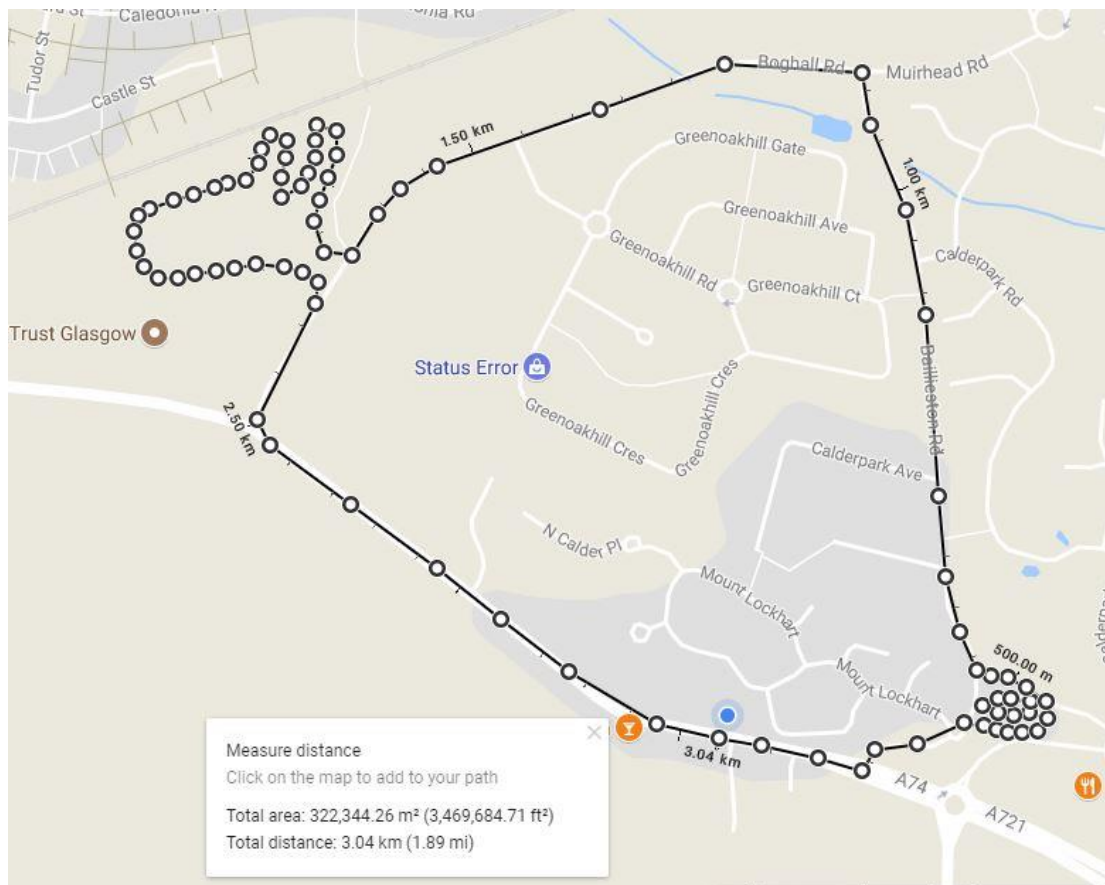


It is important to acknowledge too that imagination figured heavily on our experience of these places at the time. As we revisited a location that was once a fertile ground for ideas and dreams we questioned whether it was easier or harder to imagine ourselves here. How had our expectations and our dreams changed? We wondered whether it would be fair to say that we had a relationship with the landscape we were in beyond the one that we created during our adolescence. We decided without moving back to Hamilton it would be highly unlikely to replace the nostalgic with something new. We wondered whether the imaginative component had dissolved completely to be replaced with nostalgia or is there still a tendency to imagine things onto the locations. It is pertinent to note the amount of times that we suggested 'we should do...' It is interesting how some dreams – like wanting to be a pro-skateboarder – have fallen by the wayside whilst others resurface: 'we should take that road trip we always talked about and never did.' Bob and I discussed revisiting the same locations again but with more of our friends and opening the experience up to a wider range of people and memories. We discussed how we thought certain friends would react, how seriously we thought they would take it. We discovered that our landscape was determined by the people who were there. One invitation invites another and the possibility to remember one thing in turn invites you to consider other people and involve other relationships into that process.

PART 2 – GLASGOW

The second part of the task instructs the participant to 'Return to the city where you now live and use your hometown experience to discover new ways of walking in the city, new places to hang out in' (A *Mis-guide* to Anywhere, 2006: p.80). Here, the participant is asked to transpose memories and experiences from one place (particularly those of childhood and adolescence) onto a new place (the neighbourhood where they now live). The aim is to find new ways of walking and it is presented with the assumption that by acknowledging and embracing the ways they used to walk they will uncover new relationships with the landscape. My first step, then, was to identify the key differences between my landscape experiences in the 'then' of Hamilton and the 'now' of Glasgow.

To do this, I began by drawing out a map of my regular walking route, a useful strategy for reflecting on the habitual practices which shape my current landscape experience. The map details the specific route I take most days accompanied by my dog, Rocco.



(Figure 50. Map of regular walking route, Glasgow, Andrew Henry, 2017)

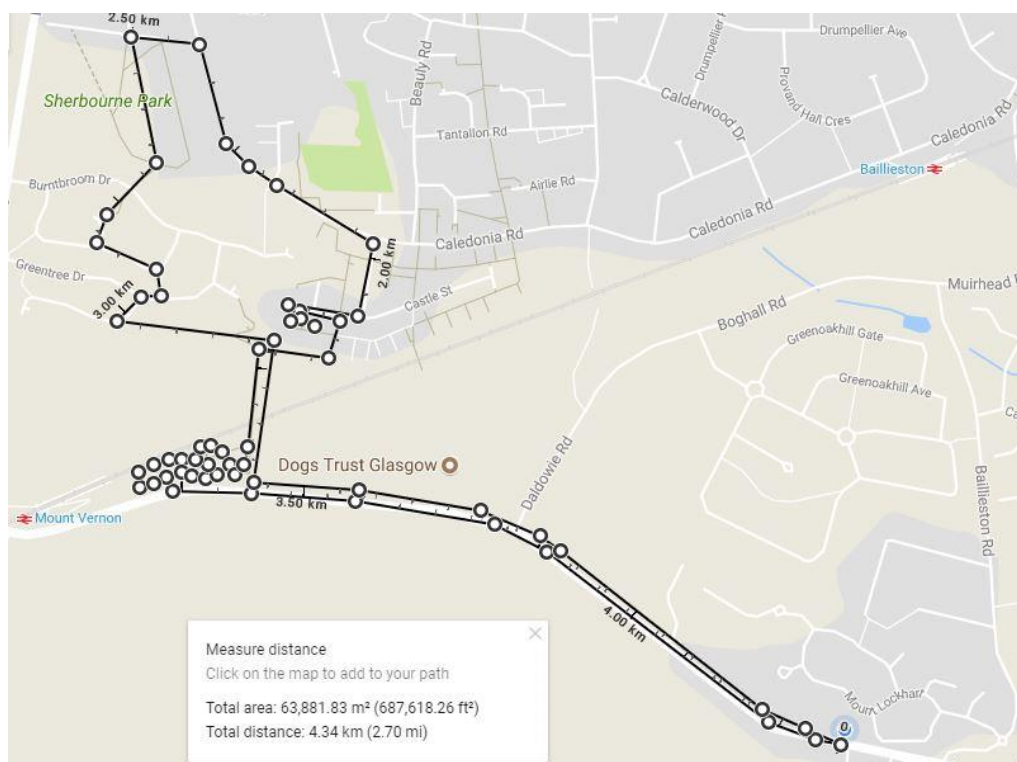
The journey begins at my house (signalled by the blue dot at the bottom of the map), and works its way round to the Broomhouse Park (the dense group of black and white spots on the right of the map) where I let my dog off the lead to run around or play fetch. From outside the park, I continue to walk around the block which cuts its way through two separate housing estates down to Boghill Road. After following the road around I take a detour off the pavement and climb a small hill to a wide patch of grass which covers the old greyhound racing track and let my dog off the lead again. There is still a distinct oval shape laid out which Rocco enjoys running around. Once he is thoroughly tired we travel back along the Hamilton Road to my house. The journey works out at

around 2 miles in length and can take anywhere between 30 minutes to an hour depending on how much time I spend throwing a ball or chatting to other dog walkers. This, though, is the limit and range of my regular walking practice in the specific neighbourhood where I live and I do not take many diversions from it, this is an efficient path which meets all my current needs.

As I have aged, my relationship with landscape has changed in a number of distinct ways and mapping out my regular walking practice highlights a number of these differences. One of the most fundamental changes is in my motivations for walking. Whereas once I walked to seek out new possibilities for entertainment, to explore and discover new things to do and new places to hang out in, I now walk explicitly for exercise – to keep myself and my dog healthy. The shift from exploration to exercise is reflected in the habitual routine of my evening walk; I am far less adventurous and spend no time trying to discover alternatives to the route I have established. Another significant difference is the time I dedicate to walking. In my adolescence there was ample time to fill with activity and I had time to walk to the far corners of the town (and even outside established boundaries as I mentioned earlier in this chapter). Now, as an adult, my walking practice is scheduled to fit in to a much narrower window of time between a host of other priorities and responsibilities that I did not have (or had to a much lesser extent) when I was younger. Again, this is reflected in my standard walking route which is organised by ease and efficiency. Certain demands on my time restrict my ability to have the kinds of experience and explorations that I had as a teenager – I am not able to travel as far on routes that take up too much of my time, for example. My regular walking route is predictable and efficient but purposely so, in order to manage the activity within the wider context of my lived experience. Companionship is another important factor in shaping my current walking practice. Walking with a dog means that I am guided by his needs as well as my own. I need to find areas where he can be free to run around off the lead, places that are not too congested with cars, places that are ‘dog friendly’. No such limitations were present during my walks in Hamilton as a teenager. It is fair, on reflection, to assume that the limits I place on my

walking practice have an impact on my landscape experience – there are fewer opportunities to discover new places, engage in new activities or create new relationships.

Building on this insight, I started to form ideas about a new walking strategy informed by the differences between my regular walking activity and those past experiences of walking in Hamilton: motivated by exploration rather than exercise, conducted in ample time and not restricted by being accompanied by a dog. In practical terms I decided to apply these differences as a methodological base for a number of alternative walks. Below I present a map which shows the route taken for one:



(Figure 51. Map of *Mis-guide* exploration route, Glasgow, Andrew Henry, 2017)

In this example I set out in the opposite direction from my standard walking route and followed the Hamilton Road towards Mount Vernon. I was guided only by my sense of curiosity and made decisions based on elements of the environment I found interesting. A large stone wall runs parallel with the Hamilton Road but there is a break about the half a mile mark and in the gap there is a narrow path overgrown with nettles and weeds, and the ground is covered in shattered glass from smashed beer bottles. When I follow the path it reveals a large opening hidden from the main

road. At the centre there is a small derelict stone building and I take the time to look around. Instantly visible are the traces of my adolescent landscape from Hamilton – the beer bottles, broken fencing, chard bits of wood, graffiti – documents which connected me to a number of past experiences. I decide to follow the trail laid out by these documents down the path, under a railway underpass, and up a narrow embankment. The path brings me out to a residential area. After wandering around the residential area for some time I follow the road back towards the path that takes me back to the underpass. From there, I make my way to the Hamilton Road and back to my own house. The total journey is around 2.7 miles in length and took 50 minutes.

My alternative walking strategy enabled me to discover new spaces in my immediate environment that I had never encountered before. Whilst the objective was to discover new ways of walking inspired by the past, what my experience revealed was that taking a path motivated by past experience exposed a material landscape that was remarkably similar to those I created as a teenager and rediscovered during my visit to Hamilton with Bob. All the markings of my adolescent landscape were present in the places I discovered during my walk. The bottles and other detritus operated as documents which called back to past action, and I could imagine my younger-self as the person who produced them (or some of them, at least). What the experience seems to demonstrate is that the materials and markings which I associate with my experience of growing up in Hamilton, are not as specific to the places and times when I was experiencing them but, rather, this adolescent landscape (elements or variations of it) is common and continues to be carried out by new generations in many different areas (including my immediate environment) in the present. I simply do not encounter them because my landscape experience is guided by a different set of concerns and motivations. I have no need to find these half hidden spaces or the desire to spend time there and neither do most adults – and that is exactly how these spaces exist.

A broader assessment of this *Mis-guide* task shows that it reawakens the participant to their own adolescent landscape through a series of discrete autotopographic performances/re-

enactments. It leads to an identification and discussion of particular markers in the environment which bring into focus the activities that inform memories and experience of those places. Finally, it awakens the participant to the presence of the adolescent landscape in the present. An alternative landscape experience that is uncovered but not necessarily adopted.

TASK 3

Make your own *Mis-guides*:

- to anywhere/ everywhere/ somewhere/ elsewhere/ nowhere
- to the city
- to education
- to social interaction
- to International politics

(2006, p.62)

The final task invites the participant to create their own *Mis-guide*. As a response to the provocation I used the *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* as inspiration to create my own *Mis-guide* document. Having studied the spectrum of tasks, I used specific examples as stimulus to generate my own set of tasks to work into my own *Mis-guide* composition. This is an eight sided pamphlet which was created using Microsoft Publisher and composed with a selection of my own images, found images, a variety of stock shapes and fonts, and a number of my own *Mis-guided* ideas. The result is included – in digital form – in the appendix at the end of the thesis.

The task builds on a familiar motif that recurs at many points throughout the *Mis-guide* where the participant is asked to create and share their own ideas in material form. In an earlier section, the guide suggests that the participant should create a personal *Mis-guided Atlas* and prompts the maker to draw attention to places inspired by a number of nostalgic memories ('where you first and last met lovers') or imaginary ('you'd like to redesign the urban landscape [do it]') suggestions. Once created, the participant should pass their atlas to a friend or, rather more whimsically, 'quietly deposit it in the reference section of your nearest library'. So, the instruction to create runs through Wrights & Sites work.

By undertaking this final task the participant is simultaneously contributing to and disseminating the principles of misguidance to new (and sometimes unsuspecting) potential participants and creating new opportunities for imaginative or fictional engagements with landscape. There is a mutation process that has to occur as the task challenges the participant to find their own equivalences and present a new set of tasks for others to involve themselves with. This process of reflection reveals what you think misguidance is and what you think misguidance is for. You have to be able to understand what you have been doing in order to understand and shape what you will be asking of others. In some sense, this task is asking the participant to document their own interpretation of the work, to evaluate their understanding and experience of misguidance (such as it is), put these ideas into material form with the hope that you will pass this object onto someone else and that they will be able to engage with the ideas inherent to it. The hope is that the ideas will extend in reach and change as it passes from one person to the next.

The *Mis-guide* anticipates and encourages elaboration and mutation, stating clearly ‘we say “A”, not “The”, *Mis-guide* to Anywhere in the knowledge that there are many more *Mis-guides* (specific and generic) that could be written’ (2006, p.62). They extend the scope for interpretation, reassuring those who might produce their own to use the guide as a loose template only. Showing the flexible qualities of the *Mis-guide* they inform the participant: ‘At any point in this book interpret: ‘City’ as metropolis, town, village, hamlet, house, room, body, world, field, beach, etc., as appropriate’ (ibid, p.62). Even the task itself is not simply suggesting that you only create a *Mis-guide* to anywhere of your own but that you can adopt misguidance and apply it to create a guide of whatever subjects you want. However, if the participant is taking *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* as a loose framework then they will be responsible for documenting their own discrete performances and imagined performances that they undertook (as that forms part of *A Mis-guide to Anywhere’s* makeup). The participant reflects on what they understand of the core principals to misguidance-gained through a practical engagement with *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* – and then use this understanding as the basis for new suggestions that fit those ideas.

THEATRICAL DOCUMENTATION

There is a mythology produced in the creation of a *Mis-guide* supported by the notion that you may be contributing to some larger network. As I was producing mine,⁵⁵ my imagination filled with images of other potential participants putting into action my *Mis-guide* ideas. I thought about who might find the guide and what they might do with it, as well as how far these ideas and exercises might reach. This engagement alone is fun and entertaining. It is not necessarily necessary to have to witness someone discovering the guide and watch them undertake the exercises, the thought that they *might* is enough to provide pleasure in and of itself. It is possible to see future participants enacting your *Mis-guide* exercises in your mind's eye as you put together your own instructions and it is that possibility which gives pleasure. The work of Philip Auslander seems pertinent here, particularly the character of theatrical documentation that he lays out in *The Performativity of Performance Documentation* (2006). A summary of these ideas can be found in the framing chapter of this thesis. Auslander highlights that theatrical documentation is made for an audience of its own and had 'no meaningful prior existence as autonomous events presented to audiences' and therefore the space of the document 'becomes the only space in which the performance occurs' (Auslander, 2006: p.84). Ultimately for Auslander,

the pleasures of a work 'are available from the documentation and therefore do not depend on whether an audience witnessed the original event... [or even that] ...they may not even depend on whether the event actually happened.

(Auslander, p.9)

A Mis-guide to Anywhere and the *Mis-guides* that Wrights & Sites hope others will produce, can operate on this level. There certainly is pleasure to gain from the imaginative engagement with the guide itself. I was unable to spend the time undertaking all the misguided tasks included in the *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* but I did enjoy reading and imagining myself or others trying out some of the

⁵⁵ See appendix

more outlandish tasks such as ‘When you see others approaching, say to yourself: “they're coming to get you Barbara!” You are Barbara. Move through crowds without giving yourself away’ (2006, p.35). *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* feeds on that imaginative engagement and transposes those imagined scenarios onto place, stimulating new kinds of relationship between imagined performances and the fictitious landscape where they reside. Performance here is both the thing done – the act of imagining – and the thing imagined – the scenario as seen in the mind’s eye. The landscape emerges as a continuing part of that experience. The task puts place is at the heart of the imagined experience, as Barbara we may imagine ourselves trying to move through crowds but we can also imagine how this might look if we were to undertake this task in a busy high-street shop or a supermarket. The tasks allow for the creation of imagined scenarios where both the performance and the landscape are constituted in the mind. The same is true for my own tasks that I thought up to put in my own guide, for example:

Dog-Walking

Instead of visiting your ‘usual’ spot, let your dog take charge. Follow your dog on the route that most interests them, allow them to lead you on new adventures through bushes, woods, rivers... other people’s gardens...

How different is your journey when you follow your furry friend wherever they want to go? How different might it be if you were to do the same with your pet elephant, leopard, kangaroo, gremlin...?

(See Appendix, p.262)

Whilst I have not undertaken this task specifically, I can clearly see in my mind’s eye the chaos that would be caused if I were to, and there is pleasure to be found in the thought. It shows that our landscape experience extends beyond physical realms into the fictitious and imagined.

It is also true that some of the exercises in *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* implicate the participant in playful role play and ask them to perform in a more theatrical way. The *Mis-guide* exercise which asks that you ‘quietly deposit it in the reference section of your nearest library’

positions the participant as a kind of character – to act in a way that is outside the realms of a person's normal behaviour. There are not many people who would make a habit of walking into a library and surreptitiously depositing something they wrote amongst the resident books on the shelves. This subversive act suggests connotations of being a spy or part of some elaborate heist. The landscape of the library is altered to reflect this imaginative intervention as the participant-turn-performer creates an exciting landscape where there are stakes; there is potential to be foiled in their task and unmasked as a spy or, at least, as not a regular library user.

Embodying this playfulness seems to fit with the overall tone of the *Mis-guide* and reinforces that the tasks do not need to be taken seriously. The *Mis-guide* positions the participant within the fictitious landscape that they are being asked to create for themselves. The imagined landscape moves from an invisible plain of perception (as with the other two tasks), something that you think about, towards an enactment within the imagined landscape. Your performance of the task manifests the imagined landscape in reality as you literally act out the instructions, performing in a way that is outside the realms of your everyday experience.

The prior exercises I have investigated in this chapter attempt to open up an alternative nostalgic and imaginative layer of perception of the landscape. The creation and deployment of a personal *Mis-guide* seems to suggest that Wrights & Sites want to offer alternative guide-book options to potential visitors (as per their suggestion that the participant leave a guide in the local library). This final task focuses on the imaginary landscape that it wants you to create for others rather than yourself. The other tasks in the *Mis-guide* are grounded in the personal interaction with landscape; they are relatively introspective in terms of their impact (in that they invite the participant to consider how the tasks have altered their own experience of their environment). This task on the other hand, inverts this and invites the participant to project their ideas outward for others to engage with.. This is not so much about the imaginary landscape as the participant experiences it but, rather, the imaginary landscape that you hope others will be able to access. This

does not preclude your own imaginative relationship; as I have already discussed, it takes imagination to create the tasks, to imagine what your suggestions will do for other people and there is pleasure in that. The *Mis-guide* informs us that landscape is not simply a personal subjective response but that there are transactions of ideas. The landscape is reinvented through multiple enactments, remembering and uses.

Landscape is not purely subjective but is a site for multiple transactions wherein we learn and embody it. The landscape is often created for us in the documents we engage with, particularly paraphernalia relating to travel and tourism but also in our everyday experience (in the ways that we are nudged towards certain types of experience and prohibited from others). Regardless of your experience of a particular location, whether you are a resident or a first time visitor, a guidebook will always position the reader as subordinate. Traditional tourist guides will present an officially sanctioned or purposefully selected group of attractions to direct a reader's attention to (perhaps: 'visit the Hamilton mausoleum with the second longest echo in Europe' or 'see if you can spot all of Hamilton's 25 giant horse sculptures'). These decisions are always motivated, either by the personal taste of the person making it or by the agency which has a stake in what is being presented. South Lanarkshire Council – for example – has a vested interest in promoting Hamilton in a particular way which accentuates its attractions in order to stimulate visitor numbers or growth in the local economy. The kinds of landscape that are being encouraged in these guides are ones that are anticipating the visitation of a number of key focal points included in them (out of which the landscape will be built). This has the distinct consequence that the producers of guide books put themselves in a position of authority whereby they are in charge of deciding what these focal points are and why they deserve to be visited.

The *Mis-guide*, on the other hand, encourages the agency of the person reading it. They have to use their own initiative and make their own decisions, as the participant is guided by their own memories, emotions and experiences. Rather than offering suggestions of where to go or what

to see, the *Mis-guide* asks the participant to make their own considerations. When the guide suggests that the participant 'Find somewhere to sit. Stay there for 1-24 hours. Watch what goes on' (2006, p.19) it is not telling them where or on what to sit, it asks the participant to make a judgment call on how long they should do this and what they see will be entirely dependent on the choices that are made. If offered to a large group, the *Mis-guide* would provoke a much broader set of experiences than traditional guides. The variety of places explored in a task that asks us to 'Take a map of the city. Draw a symbol of unity, allegiance, peace or freedom across the map. Mark out a route, tracing the symbol as accurately as roads allow. Start to walk this route' would be extensive in comparison to the standard experience gained by visiting all the main attractions you would expect to be presented in a standard guidebook. In this way, the *Mis-guide* subverts traditional hierarchies by emphasising the visitor's own agency in deciding what direction and to what destinations they should go.

The ways and means of transferring ideas of landscape have a direct bearing on their attitudes towards it. The landscape is created in the documents you engage with – a guidebook will literally guide the reader to certain perceptions, honing an idea of what the landscape is through a process of selection. The *Mis-guide* subverts traditional approaches to guidance by placing the user of the guide at its centre. Most tourist guides are written as if in a position of authority, the landscape that has been 'objectively' assessed and narrowed down to a few details and then packaged up and promoted to visitors. It is worth asking where the *Mis-guide* positions the person reading it. It requires the person reading it to acknowledge their own agency in the creation of landscape. Whilst the *Mis-guide* may be partly interested in how landscape is understood, it seems more concerned with how the landscape is experienced. This is why it does not direct attention to specific landmarks and instead focuses on the fantastic in the banality of the immediate space. What I mean by this is that the *Mis-guide* does not have a stake in what the participant thinks about a particular location, it is not trying to 'guide' them towards a particular interpretation. Rather, it hopes to achieve a type of engagement which renders the ordinary extraordinary. It presents tasks

as opposed to descriptions or images of specific places. The landscape only becomes available through an engagement with the tasks, limited only by the participant's imagination. The person with the *Mis-guide* is responsible for the kind of landscape that is constructed.

Similar to NVA's light-trail images and Whitehead's drawings and soundscapes, the *Mis-guide* offers an alternative to other forms of documentation which often attempt to resemble a live event as closely as possible, like a photograph which attempts to replicate the look of a performance. These more traditional forms of documentation (as discussed in detail in the introduction and first chapter of this thesis) position the live event as an original from which the rest are attempting to replicate in as 'realistic' fashion as possible (or Auslander's first classification of documentation which he calls documentary). The problems and impossibilities of this approach are also discussed earlier in the thesis. Rather than making materials from an original which can never replicate the liveness of the event itself, the *Mis-guide* may open up a pathway for producing materials which can allow an audience to engage with the ideas of a performance through the performance of certain tasks. Perhaps audiences may respond to being more creative in their engagement with performance documentation and appreciate exposure to a broader range of documentary materials. This performative engagement with ideas rather than copies is not unprecedented. Most museums now have sections which invite performative participation where an audience at an exhibit is asked to perform a role or implicated in a retelling of a past event. Creating suggestions and tasks is a legitimate way of documenting performance that offers a potential foundation for the development of a fresh method to documenting more traditional theatrical performance.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has shown how Wrights & Sites can help us account for the remembered and imagined aspect of our landscape experience through the enactment of specific *Mis-guide* exercises. In the first task I explored, it became clear that there is an imagined layer which plays a part in how

we perceive and engage with place. By revisiting my hometown of Hamilton with a close friend, the second task helped to make clear that our memories and perceptions of the landscape resided in the specificities of the places we visited – the objects and materiality which triggered stories and reflections as well as the performances which we chose to re-enact in the present. The transposition of such experiences onto my immediate surroundings, where I now live, demonstrated the ways that far-off times and places interpenetrate the landscape in the present moment. Finally, the creation of my own personal *Mis-guide* (see Appendix) in task three helped to articulate how the *Mis-guide* positions its participant at the heart of the landscape experience. Rather than directing them to specific locations and limiting the potentials to a selected few highlights, the *Mis-guide* acknowledges the agency of the person who is trying to build a relationship with the world around them. The *Mis-guide* offers a certain level of focus and direction but allows the participant to find their own route through the town and gain experiences of it through the decisions that they themselves took to complete each task. The *Mis-guide* thereby offers a potential framework for the documenting of more traditional performance modes by highlighting that it is possible to document ideas without attempting to produce copies or replicas from an ‘original’ event.

The work of Wrights & Sites inverts the focus of the study from materials created or commissioned by the artists for new audiences and moves towards a participatory mode in which the person engaging in the document (in this case a *mis-guide*) becomes both the audience and the creator. Here, the thesis stretches its understanding of what exactly constitutes performance documentation by working with *mis-guide* exercises that may or may not have been performed before by the company but that will likely have been performed by some other participants at some other, undefined, point in time. The ‘performance’ of the *mis-guides* can also be both physically actualised and imagined, aligning them to the Fluxus scripts in the 1960s (which I discussed in the framing chapter of this thesis). Given that the action of a *mis-guide* might take place entirely in the imagination of the person reading the guide and not manifested in any physical way beyond that thought exercise, it is fitting that the *mis-guides* do not include representations of any previous

example of the exercises. That is, they do not show other participants in the act of performing, in such a way as we might expect traditional performance documentation to do. Rather, the *mis-guides* are a provocation that invites the participant to create and make. The *mis-guides* are different from the other form of documentation in that they are a direct invitation to readers to engage physically with 'landscape' and they present opportunities for unanticipated interactions with material-cultural environments. This maps out a further stage along the path from artist-led to participatory forms of documentation. The ideas of landscape that are produced are again unstable because each instance of enacting the *mis-guide* tasks will entail different encounters with landscape; the non-human environment will also shape each enactments and each person will produce their own ideas and responses. Thus we can imagine the *mis-guides* generating a limitless range of landscapes through multiple interactions.

CONCLUSION

This thesis argues that notions of landscape can be used as a conceptual framework to analyse a specific kind of site-specific/generic performance work and its documentation, to contribute original work to ongoing debates on the practice of documentation. Its originality derives from its exploration of the connections and interplays between the triumvirate of landscape, performance and documentation. Focusing on NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites, the work shifts between detailed descriptions of each of the companies'/practitioners' documentary strategies, as well as offering a theoretical discussion of the materials these strategies produced. The study contributes to the existing knowledge on the practice of documentation by giving a clear account of how each company documents their work and then analysing a range of materials that are produced and disseminated such as blogs, photographs, marketing materials, films, and audio recordings. I use landscape as an analytical concept to challenge certain parameters for what the work and its documentation is or is not doing. Investigating the documentation through the lens of landscape has allowed me to highlight some instances where the documentation reflects – to some extent – the active, ongoing, relational process among human and nonhuman factors constituted/manifested by the work. It draws attention to, for example, NVA's light-trail images, Whitehead's audio recordings, and Wrights & Sites' *Mis-Guides*; all of which demonstrated a potential for communicating these complex relationships in their documentation (which I will outline in more detail below). Landscape is also a useful framework for exploring the inconsistencies or contradictions communicated by documents, highlighting the limitations of the forms used to represent the performance work, drawing attention to instances when the images, videos, sound recordings, written blogs, and *Mis-Guides* seem to undermine the implicit aims of the projects. Further, through an investigation of how and where each company/practitioner shares their documentation, the thesis examines some of the multiplicity of functions and purposes of these materials; such as promoting the work, keeping a record of the work, using the work as a tool for generating new work, and becoming material for new events. The thesis highlighted some of the

relationships between the readings inherent in the documentation and how these connected to and were impacted by the specific intentions of what the documentation would be used for. The following sections describe in more detail the findings of the study and draw attention to particular insights that offer a clear contribution to existing scholarship.

LANDSCAPE PERFORMANCE

Despite the range of existing terminology that could be used to categorise the work of NVA, Simon Whitehead, and Wrights & Sites – such as site-specific, site-generic, site-sensitive – this thesis argues that the alternative term of ‘landscape performance’ is an additional and useful concept for describing the work of each case study owing to the particular kinds of engagement they facilitate. My initial research has identified two prevailing theoretical frameworks for landscape: one which focuses on the analysis of the landscape as a visual phenomenon and the other which focused on the experiences that particular landscapes afford to those who inhabit them. The latter conception, landscape within a phenomenological frame, is understood as an ‘embodied cultural practice’ (Pearson, 2010: p.95). That is, that the landscape involves ‘attentive analysis of, and quite often, direct personal participation in, embodied acts of landscaping’ (ibid). I aligned the phenomenological conceptions of landscape with my selected case studies and argued that the kinds of work they produced constituted a form of landscaping as each group enabled or demanded the embodied involvement of its participants in the making of the performance and landscape. The study did not emphasise whether the subject of the work was the location where it was performed (that is, site-specific in some definitions of the term – see Hodge (2001) and Wilkie (2002) for examples), or whether it was a model of performance that could be transferred to a number of like sites (site-generic, ibid); rather the focus on landscape performance denotes work which encourages an audience to engage with their physical environment in a way that is both visual and tactile, through the carrying out of tasks. At the beginning of each chapter I made the case for why the work of my selected company or practitioner fits within this conception of landscape performance. A broad

overview of all three demonstrates the extensive scope of this work and the multiple forms that landscape performance can take.

NVA's *Speed of Light* put into place a set of conditions that allowed audience members to interact with their environment and develop a connection with the physical terrain. In the first iteration of the performance in 2012, the company invited the audience to climb Arthur's Seat at night in groups of around 20. The work brought people and the physical terrain together as they made the arduous journey up the hill, having to pay close attention to the slippery surfaces and the particular contours of the route. As the audience climbed, a choreographed movement sequence was being performed by runners wearing light-suits on the slopes opposite. Subsequent versions of the work in Yokohama, Manchester, the Ruhr and Leeds followed a similar framework in which audiences were invited to move through a location in groups whilst choreography was undertaken around them by runners (or cyclists, in the case of the Leeds iteration of the work). This work constitutes landscape performance in the way that it provided many opportunities for interactions between people and place; both runners and audiences were immersed in the act of landscaping and their understanding of what that place and performance was emerged as a result of their participation. The running participants were organised to follow lead runners in a predetermined choreography which took them up and down the steep slopes of Arthur's Seat; their experience was one that emphasised exertion, endurance, concentration, and continual communication between the runners behind and in front to say safe throughout the performance. The walkers experience moved at a slower pace as they were led in groups up the other side of the hill. They too experienced exertion from the climb but overall they moved at a much slower pace. The audience were able to take time to observe the patterns of the running participants more clearly with the advantage of distance. Given the fluid, relational context in which the work was presented, and the many reflections presented by those involved as participants, NVA's *Speed of Light* was a landscape performance which personified the position that meanings of landscapes are unfixed, in flux and contested.

Similarly, Simon Whitehead's performances also provide opportunities for audiences to gain many different kinds of landscape experience as he attempts to bring bodies, his own and others, into closer contact with the land both physically and perceptually in his work. The central concern for Whitehead is that they leave his performances with a heightened awareness and appreciation of their interconnectedness with the land/physical terrain. His works frequently involve a number of participatory modalities such as observing, listening, touching, lying, dancing and/or staying quiet, still and alert. By focusing his audience's attention on the sensations of their environment, Whitehead hopes that each audience member will become more aware of and connected to their environment. The participants' understanding of landscape emerges through the sensory experiences and quiet reflection on those sensory experiences of their environment. For *Burn* (2007) Whitehead collected passengers at the edge of a lake and transported them – via rowboat – to the small island of Vasikkasaari. During their journey, participants were invited to collect material that could help build a bonfire such as sticks, bits of wood and kindling. The participants were asked to reflect on their action in moments of stillness that Whitehead instigated throughout the performance. In this context Whitehead created an experience of intimacy which allowed the participants to gain an acute awareness of their own bodies, the bodies of those around them and their immediate environment.

Wrights & Sites, through their *Mis-Guides*, invite audiences to participate in a range of exercises which are specifically designed to make the participant consider their relationship to space/place. Their work highlights the importance of the imagination in shaping our experiences of the places we live in and travel through. Their work does not conform to the dominant modes of performance. That is, they are not ticketed events performed at a set time in front of an audience. Rather, their work enables discrete or spontaneous performances, for audiences who may or may not be aware that there is a performance happening at all – depending on whether the participant has invited another person to become co-performer/audience with them whilst undertaking the task, or the secondary audience of passers-by who happen to witness some strange articulation of

one of the tasks and are drawn to spectate out of curiosity. For the participant themselves, the *Mis-Guides* offer a platform to explore the remembered and imagined aspects of their landscape experience.

The work of NVA, Simon Whitehead, and Wrights & Sites, are all distinct from each other in the scope, scale, form, and intention. They are not linked by a common aesthetic (that is, they do not look similar). Each presents performance work that could be categorised in different ways and this study does not exclude the possibility for further categorisation. However, it does suggest that despite their differences, each of these case studies relate to each other in the specific way they engage their audience in direct participation in acts of landscaping. Landscape performance is a useful categorisation for highlighting the singular feature that manifests in a multitude of different ways. Participants come to learn what landscape is through the performance itself and a tactile immersion in the place itself. The landscape concept is useful for drawing attention to the processes that help landscape emerge through practice.

DOCUMENTARY STRATEGIES

One of the key lines of enquiry in this thesis was to investigate the documentary strategies that are used by the makers of landscape performance. Each case study addressed this by reviewing and then giving a description of the broad range of approaches applied by NVA, Simon Whitehead, and Wrights & Sites to document their performance work. My research found that each company employed a varied methodology and, often, particular forms of documentation were produced and deployed to fulfil a particular remit – to promote upcoming work, to boost ticket sales, to promote past work, to gain artistic expression, to frame/contextualise the work and/or to produce new events.

Close inspection of NVA's documentary methodology revealed that, in the main, the company produced images and other visual materials in order to record and promote their *Speed of*

Light performance. The majority of the documentation was presented on their website in photographic or written form. The company also produced a book for their Ruhr iteration of the work, co-produced by the local tourist board, and video documentation which grew in significance as the project evolved. As their work developed, so did their documentary approach, which became more significant as documentation was used not solely to provide an account of the live events, but rather, Farquhar wanted the photographers and film makers involved in the project to adapt their documentary approaches and materials to transform them into autonomous artworks in their own right. This development led NVA to present a collection of their documentation as part of a new event which gave the material a different platform to engage new audiences. The films were especially important for validating the event's status as autonomous (and not subsidiary to the other live events) as they shifted from a documentary aesthetic to something more abstract, inviting the audience to consider the material not solely for its ability to account for the details of the performance, but also for what it could express in its own right. Such a move blurs established distinctions between live performance and documentation. The narrative of NVA's documentary strategy for *Speed of Light* is one in which the company increasingly acknowledged and acted on the potential of documentation to take on new significance as part of the company's artistic output.

Simon Whitehead's documentation strategy also placed emphasis on written and visual materials. Displayed on both his website and in a book of collected performance documentation entitled *Walking to Work*, images and written descriptions were the prevailing modes of documentation. Whitehead's strategy also incorporated less conventional/polished forms of documentation, including sketches from his notebook and audio recordings. Unlike NVA's documents which were – in the main – produced to sell a forthcoming show, Whitehead's materials were generated and presented after the events took place. As a result, Whitehead's approach is driven by the desire to offer an account of his past performance works and the processes he undertook to create them for future reference, rather than as part of a wider marketing strategy or campaign. It is less surprising in this context that Whitehead would include a wider range of

documentation, including materials that relate more to the experimental or exploratory stages of his process than the more refined iteration that would be performed in the presence of an audience. Whitehead's audio recordings constitute new kinds of audiences for the work, not just new people engaging with them but alternative kinds of experience (such as from spectating to listening). These audio materials require a participatory engagement from the audience. Wade (2006), for example, offers the listener an immersive experience where the sound of the artist's movement through water helps to stimulate an imaginative engagement by the participant. This form of documentation has a more recognisable performance element: audio recordings involve a kind of enactment; they adhere to more traditional codes of live performance than his other forms of documentation (that is, they happen in a designated time). The audio recordings have a different quality than flicking through images or reading blog posts where the length of engagement is completely at the discretion of the viewer. The sound recordings set out a time frame; they perform over time and an audience to that work invests that time in a similar way that they might when attending a live performance event. Whitehead's audio recordings personify the kinds of relationship between people and places that he tries to produce in his live performances, inviting them to consider the sensory experience of the land that is gained through his work. Whitehead's documentary strategy is one which is not restricted by the pressures of marketing forthcoming shows and, as such, some of his documentation challenges us to consider the potential of more performative and participatory modes.

I extend the definition of documentation in my analysis of Wrights & Sites *A Mis-Guide to Anywhere*. The *Mis-Guides* are a documentation of sorts. Many of the exercises (or versions of the exercises) in the guide were undertaken by the group in other contexts. The *Mis-Guide* is a documentation of their ongoing commitment to the exploration of places. That said, it is not documentation in the same way that the first two case studies are, in that they do not refer to explicit examples of performances that have happened. Whilst the group used their *Mis-Guide* format to document some of their own practical experiences/performances, the design of their

documentation does not focus on the depiction of those experiences, but rather is intended to act as a catalyst for others to generate other experiences. The *Mis-Guide* offers an interesting framework for thinking about documentation in a way that is not static but rather exploratory. The actions it inspires show the ways that memories are linked to the land and to specific actions that happened there. In some of the *Mis-Guide* actions, for example, the participant does not just visit a place that they once visited but they are invited to re-perform actions that seem familiar and in so doing show the possibility for landscape performance itself to operate as a kind of documentation. For example, I undertook *Mis-Guide* exercises as part of my research. I returned to my hometown of Hamilton with a childhood friend and revisited the regular dwelling places of my adolescence. The experience demonstrated how certain actions performed in certain places (such as throwing stones into a loch) can function as a kind of re-enactment that keeps memories of similar experiences from childhood alive. My exploration of the *Mis-Guides* helped to affirm the position that documentation, as a practice, is not limited to the creation of material objects (images, written descriptions, sketches, audio and video recordings, objects). The findings from my *Mis-Guide* experience aligns with the existing discourse on what constitutes documentation – exemplified in books by Rebecca Schneider (2001) and Diana Taylor (2003), that explore more performative ways of preserving and communicating information such as re-enactments, storytelling, and other kinds of oral history. Although they do not conform to conventional understandings of documentation, Wrights & Sites' *Mis-Guides* and the concept of mis-guidance in general, create a useful model for a certain practice of documenting which is about the relational processes of visiting, re-enacting and imagining.

Reflecting on each of the case studies, it is clear that there are differences in approach from each of the performance makers towards the role and function of documentation and the strategies they employ. What unites each case study, though, is their embrace of documentation as a creative device that can represent the complex interrelationships between people and place promoted by their performance work. All three case studies acknowledge the creative potential of documentation to provide an outlet for new audiences to engage with landscape by employing distinctive

documentary strategies. Angus Farquhar attempted to balance the extensive amount of promotional material, which had clear aims for selling *Speed of Light* to audiences and potential producers, funders and collaborators, with documentary strategies that mapped out more personal responses to the development of the work. The evolution of the documentary process led to a radical shift in the position of documentation within the *Speed of Light* canon. In producing new performance events from adapted documentary materials, NVA challenged the ontological priority of the live performance event over the documentation created from it. As *Speed of Light* developed so too did the documentary strategies, to the extent that documentation eventually became the work that new audiences came to see.

Whitehead's Untitled States website operates differently from NVA's. Less concerned with selling the work, a large part of his website is used as a tool for him to share images, recordings and other materials with long-time collaborator Barnaby Oliver, who lives in Australia. Documentation is presented not as a finished piece of work but as a record of an ongoing process and as creative stimulus for his collaborator. The feedback loop is such that they post multiple iterations of the work as it evolves through sharing, adapting and adding new ideas and materials into the mix. Rather than a marketing strategy to sell the work, Whitehead's documentary strategy is incorporated into his creative practice as an important generator of new ideas and material. Whitehead provides opportunities for new audiences to engage with his work through the digital space of his website and in doing so presents the documentation as an access point into his methods. Whitehead also experiments with documentary modes through his audio recordings, which are available both online and on a CD which accompanies the book *Walking to Work* (2006). This book works as a collection of documentary materials detailing information about his past performances and showing images and sketches that contextualise it. The inclusion of Whitehead's sound recordings simultaneously signals his commitment to provide new audiences with opportunities to gain sensory experience of place and an acknowledgement that performance documentation offers potential to provide such opportunities.

Wrights & Sites *A Mis-Guide to Anywhere* was the culmination of years of research and experimentation with the concept of mis-guidance undertaken by each individual member of the Wrights & Sites team. As such, the document is not an attempt to represent a singular event that happened in the past but rather to share a set of principles and ideas with other potential participants. The *Mis-Guides* operate like a virus, with each new participant invited to share their *Mis-Guide* experiences and techniques with others in the hope that the ideas spread. The *Mis-Guides* ask the participants to generate their own performances and in so doing create a host of potential audiences for that work such as the friend who may accompany the participant as they undertake the task or the incidental secondary audience who witness the participant as they spontaneously carry out a task. That said, the *Mis-Guides* also disrupt clear performer/spectator relationships. Many of the tasks ask the participant to observe and reflect on aspects of the environment and the people they encounter on their travels, effectively turning unaware people into performers for the *Mis-Guide* participant. Alternatively, the discrete autotopographical performances (that is, performances which interweave autobiographical elements with place; see Heddon, 2006) provoked by other *Mis-Guide* activities require the participants to move fluidly between the performer and audience role for each other's stories, actions and re-enactments. Despite different documentary approaches, NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites all explore the potential for documentation to provide fresh opportunities for audiences to engage in their work and challenge established ideas that the live performance event is more significant than the documentation created from it.

ANALYSING DOCUMENTATION

The thesis also reflected on the ways that landscape may operate as a useful concept for showing the potential and limits of certain documentary strategies. The chapter on NVA, for example, highlights McAteer's light-trail images and discusses how these expressive photographs help to communicate a sense of movement which evokes a less fixed or stable image of landscape (such as the paintings by Dutch landscape artists to which landscape owes its name). The basis of my

argument was that the light-trail images reflected one aspect of the phenomenological conception of landscape through their emphasis on movement over stasis, a detail further accentuated by the work's night-time setting, which negated most other details in the foreground. The landscape concept opens up our understanding of these images by drawing attention to their depiction of movement through the landscape, an aspect of lived experience and that might be understood as an act of landscaping. In the phenomenological framework, landscape is understood through the acts that happen there rather than as something stable, like a photograph to be observed. Conversely, the personal testimony of Andrew Filmer, who ran as a participant in the *Speed of Light* event, detailed a number of specific aspects of his experience, which were central to his understanding of the work. He highlighted the importance of communication between runners, the camaraderie and personal relationships engendered through the experience, the impact of the weather on the participants' ability to climb the hill, the obstacles put in place by the environment, the dangers of wet grass and steep slopes, the exertion involved in the task and the sense of achievement and pride when the work concluded. These factors were of paramount importance for Filmer in his evaluation of the work. So, whilst McAteer's light-trail images managed to represent something of the movement of the runners across the terrain, it did so at the expense of many other aspects of the work that was central to the experience.

Angus Farquhar's blog adds another dimension to the discussion, as a more personal and autobiographical account of what the work meant to him was communicated through his running blog, *The Grim Runner*. The analysis of the blog highlighted the impact that memories and nostalgia had on shaping Farquhar's experience of place, particularly the way that the action of running had on shaping his relationship to landscape. The study showed the ways in which certain personal histories colour our perceptions of place and, in the case of Farquhar, motivated him to perform in particular ways. *Speed of Light* was inspired by Farquhar's habitual running practices in places that were similar to Arthur's Seat but he also linked the action of running in difficult terrain to moments where he was proud of himself or made his family proud (through stories of his early cross country

activities that defied unsupportive teachers, or the way his family cheered and celebrated his successes in marathons). Again, landscape became a key analytical concept which enabled a critique of these readings of the blog, as the contradictions between the kind of landscape evoked through the personal accounts of running and stories of his family were read against the kinds of landscape evoked by his descriptions of the places *Speed of Light* toured to, like Salford. The promotional materials too, such as the Ruhr Tourist book, also impacted on this reading. Ruhr Tourismus co-opted the *Speed of Light* concept and McAteer's images for use in promotional materials, which were used to sell a romanticised presentation of the Ruhr landscape park as a site for development and innovation. Landscape, then, was useful for showing the impact that nostalgia had on shaping Farquhar's motivations to produce the work but also for showing the inconsistencies in the various messages he communicated by the particular forms of documentation in his portfolio.

Simon Whitehead also produced documentary material which worked towards destabilising fixed, monolithic, representations of landscape. Each mode of his documentary strategy offers creative potential as well as raising questions specific to that particular mode. For example, Whitehead's photographic documentations are well suited to visually haptic interpretations. That is, the close-up photography focuses on particular details of the land and interactions with it, and makes them clear to see. Such representations of the land focus more on the texture and pattern than on action but, as such, they evoke a sensory experience that can be understood through the concept of haptic visibility, in which the audience gains a sense of touch through viewing what is being touched. Further, Whitehead's drawings work as performance scores which simultaneously represent and inform movement. Each score can be understood as an invitation to perform. Whitehead's audio recordings document his interaction with the land: the audience listen to his breathing and the influence he exerts on the environment is reflected in every sound. With no visual cues to accompany the recordings, all the attention of the audience member is focused on listening. Such documentation focuses the audience's attention on particular interactions the performer is having with their environment. Despite each of Whitehead's documentary materials offering a

distinct presentation of landscape, their assemblage on the page reflects Whitehead's desire to avoid pinning down the meaning of either, with many incongruent materials positioned beside more accessible materials.

Unlike NVA and Simon Whitehead, the Wrights & Sites chapter focused its attention on the discrete landscape performances inspired by the *Mis-Guide* exercises rather than the material object of the *Mis-Guide*. The document itself does not show examples of participants undertaking the *Mis-Guide* exercises. They are not created to function as documentation in the traditional sense. Rather, they are a direct invitation to readers to engage physically with 'landscape' and they present opportunities for unanticipated interactions with material-cultural environments. My research methodology shifted at this point in my study as I undertook fieldwork which involved participating in my own *Mis-Guide* adventure. The influence of memory and imagination on our perception of our lived in environment became apparent as I reflected on my own experience of conducting a walk in my hometown with a close childhood friend. It was clear that my response to the *Mis-Guide* experience was deeply personal as I recounted stories from my adolescence and re-created some of the scenes from that nostalgic childhood narrative. The ideas of landscape produced by the *Mis-Guide* are necessarily unstable as they rely on the individual to carry out the exercises, and each person will produce their own responses to the provocations in each case, and even the same participant will not be able to recreate the same exercises twice.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH

This study lays the foundation for further research in and beyond the discipline of theatre/performance studies. As it places significant emphasis on the strategies used by performance makers to represent the complex relationships between scopic and tactile engagement with landscape in their documentation, this research might be used to help re-think the ways that landscape is represented in, for instance, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and forms of cartography. By applying distinctive methods that draw attention to the immersive, lived experience

of landscape, documentary modes – like light-trail photography, audio recordings and *Mis-Guide* exercises – may provide useful alternatives for representing landscape by emphasising the lived experience. The research may also offer additional dimensions for the marketing strategies of, for instance, local councils, organisations, and tourist boards in promoting particular places. Such interested parties could be directed to move beyond an image of a place's significant landmarks towards the actions and experiences that those places enable or inspire. Therefore, the discussion is not simply about shifting the subject matter of their marketing materials but also about rethinking their modes of presentation. Future research might help organisations extend their marketing practices to include other participatory forms of documentation. For example, *Mis-Guides* could be presented alongside standard tourist guides to offer visitors the chance to experience the place in a way that would be radically different to the standard patterns of tourism and visitation.

In regards to theatre/performance studies, I plan to extend this research by further exploring experimental methods of documenting performance inspired by the work of NVA, Simon Whitehead and Wrights & Sites. There is potential to continue my exploration of particular forms of documenting that expressly attempt to draw attention to other sensory experiences provided by landscape performance besides the visual, focusing instead on the tactile or audible. This thesis clearly highlights the importance of these other sensory components, which condition our experience of place, and draws attention to their lack of representation in many current documentary methodologies. While there is a growing body of research and practice that explores alternative forms of documenting, my enquiry suggests that there is further potential to open up discussion about the value of drawings, re-enactments, and audio recordings as forms of performance documentation. My conception of landscape performance could also be explored further through an investigation of some of the other companies and practitioners I highlighted in my introduction. It would be valuable to collect and describe many more examples of landscape performance to articulate the specific kinds of engagement the term denotes and to solidify its autonomy from the other categorisations of performance in the field such as site-specific, site-

generic, and site-sensitive. Based on this current research, I believe that further study of experimental approaches to documenting landscape performance has the potential to inspire alternative methods of documenting performance, which acknowledge the importance of, and attempt to account for, the lived experience of participants within performance environments.

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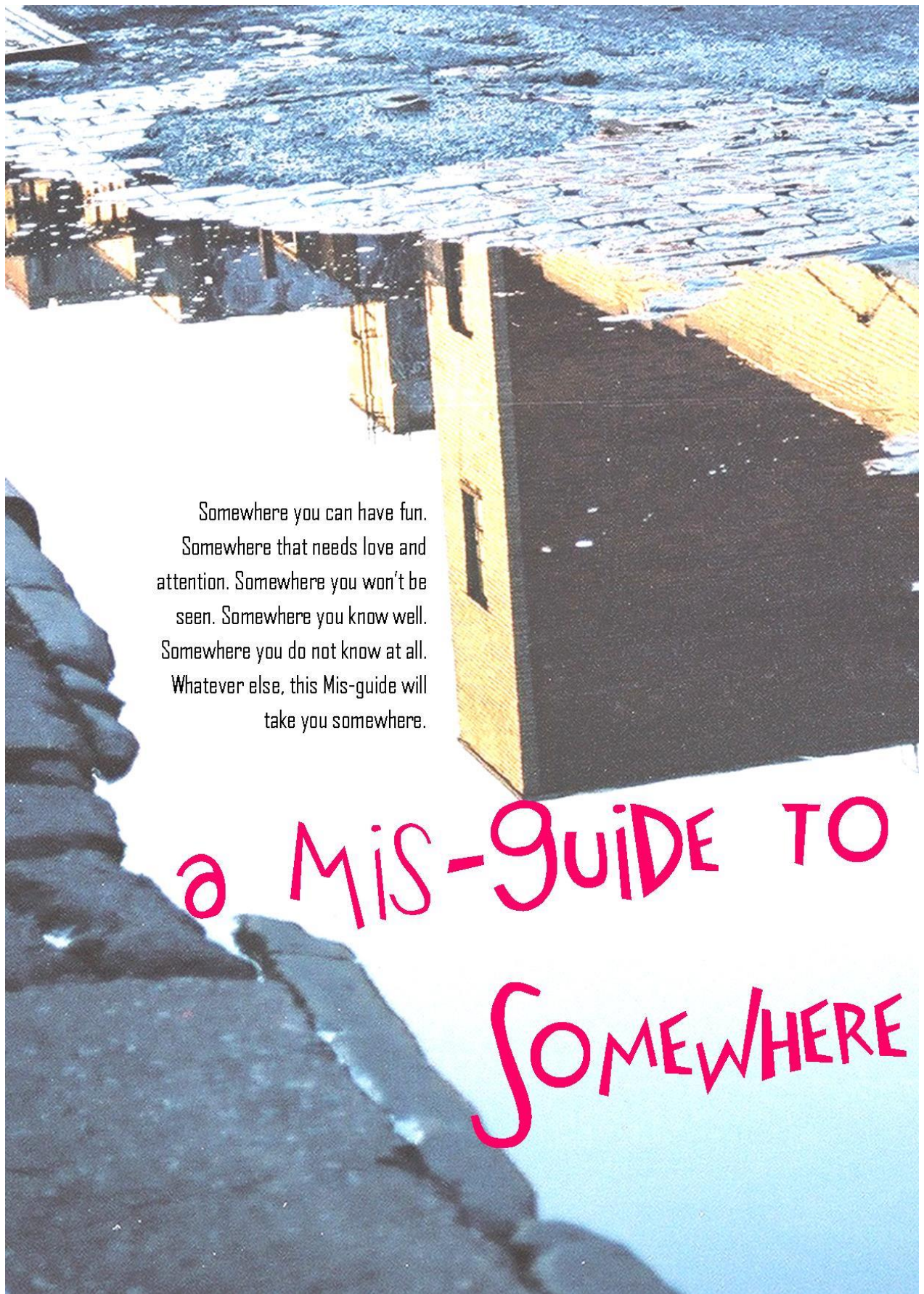
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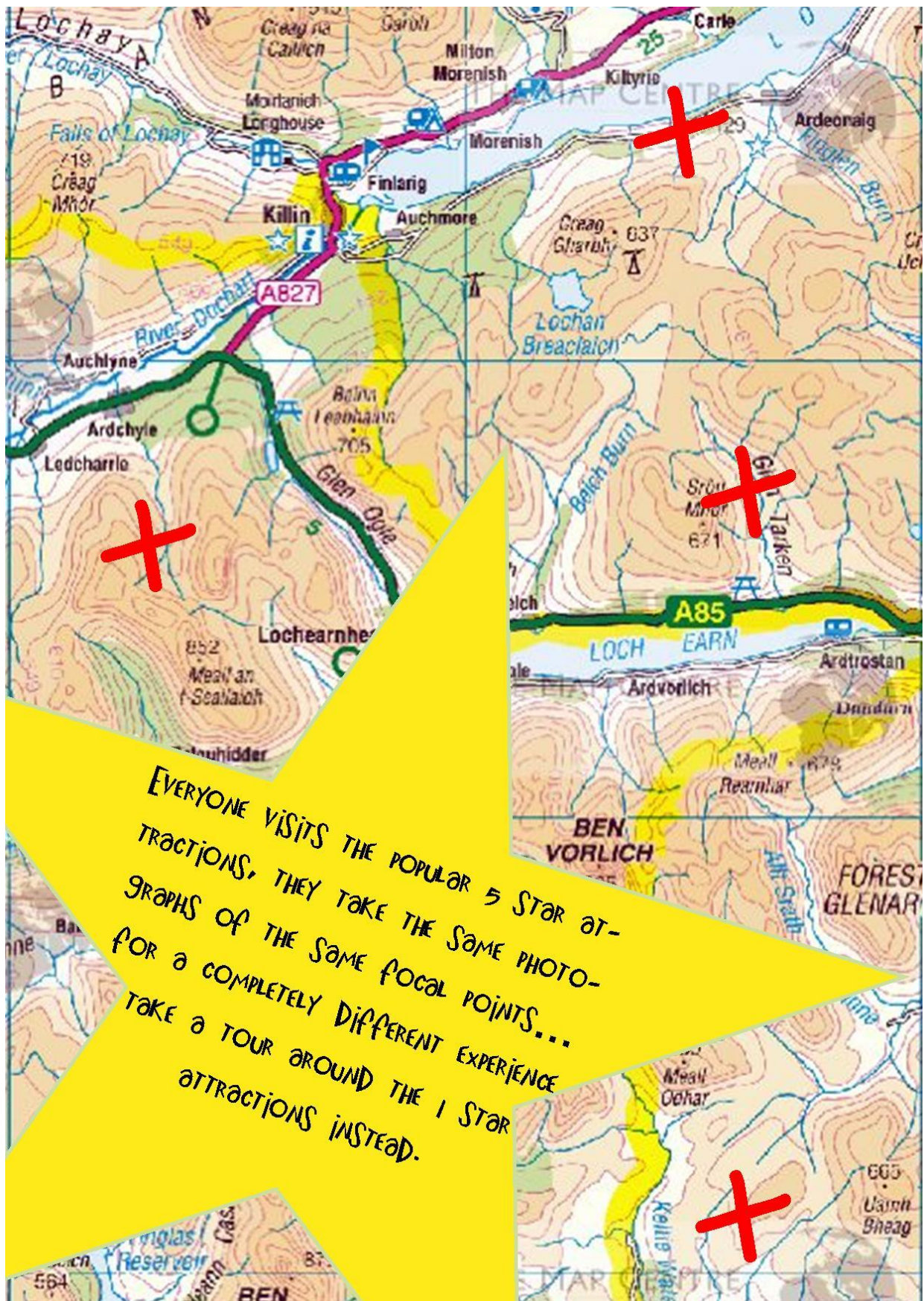
APPENDIX

A Mis-guide to Somewhere

A Mis-guide to Somewhere is a creative output that was produced as a result of my research into Wrights & Sites. In Chapter 4, I selected a number of tasks to enact and analyse from *A Mis-guide to Anywhere* (2006). The instruction for the final task invites the participant to generate their own *mis-guide*. In order to investigate the full implication of the task it was necessary to reflect on my understanding and experience of mis-guidance, form my own mis-guidance ideas, and then organise these into a document which could be printed off and shared with other people. I chose to loosely imitate Wrights & Sites' aesthetic with a mix of visual imagery (photographs, maps, shapes) and typography which I put together in a collage format. The suggested *mis-guide* ideas are my own but they do attempt to inspire similar kinds of investigation between participant and landscape as the Wrights & Sites *mis-guide* that inspired it. My analysis of the whole task and this creative work can be found on p.259 of this thesis. I include these pages from *A Mis-guide to Somewhere* to illustrate the creative response itself and to act as a reference point for the reader as they work through the chapter. I expect that it will allow for a better understanding of what was involved in the undertaking the task.



A Mis-guide to Somewhere, 2017: front cover

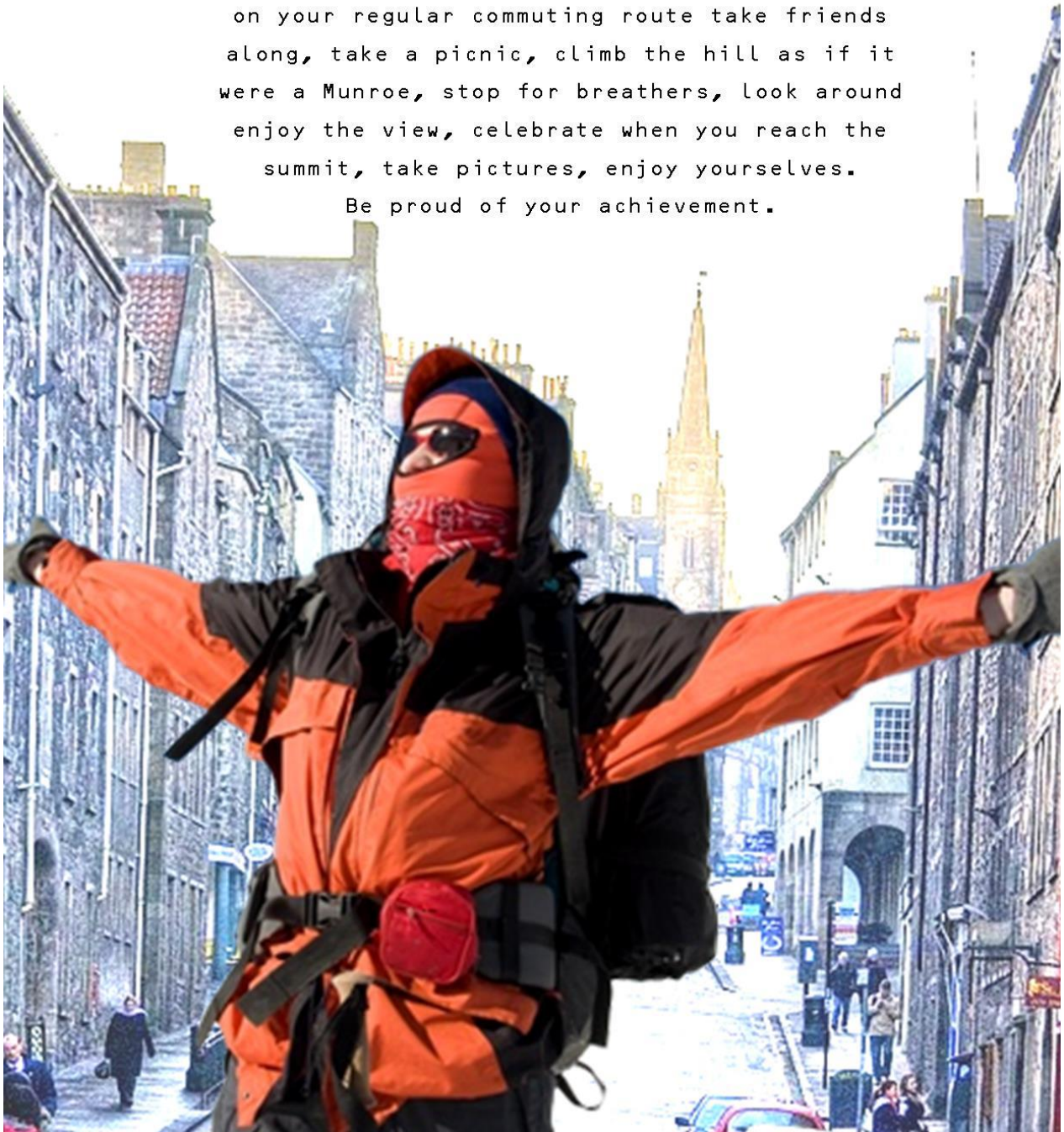


A Mis-guide to Somewhere, 2017: p.2

Hill climbing

In Scotland thousands of people take great pleasure in walking up one of the many mountains dotted around the country and, yet, on our walk to work the 'big hill' is usually the part we dread the most.

Rectify this. Congregate at the base of a hill on your regular commuting route take friends along, take a picnic, climb the hill as if it were a Munroe, stop for breathers, look around enjoy the view, celebrate when you reach the summit, take pictures, enjoy yourselves. Be proud of your achievement.



the floor is lava.
go!

A Mis-guide to Somewhere, 2017: p.4



Dog-Walking

Instead of visiting your usual spot, let your dog take charge. Follow your dog on the route that most interests them, allow them to lead you on new adventures through bushes, woods, rivers... other people's gardens...

How different is your journey when you follow your furry friend wherever they want to go? How different might it be if you were to do the same with your pet elephant, leopard, kangaroo, gremlin...?



Put your music player on shuffle and let the songs become the soundtrack to your movie as you wander through the city. How does the music shape your experience? What characters do you become? let the music turn bystanders into allies or villains in an ever shifting plot?

A Mis-guide to Somewhere, 2017: p.6

Become a private investigator for the person two cars in front of you. Follow this car without being noticed, stay incognito, be as inconspicuous as possible.


Who is in this car you are following? Where are they going? What are they doing... is it a major arms deal or are they just picking up milk? Follow your mark to places you've never been before, see where the action happens.

The moment they suspect they have a tail or show any acknowledgment of your presence at all, you've been rumbled go and find another target.

TAILING



A Mis-guide to Somewhere, 2017: p.7



Tourist boards direct visitors to pre-determined spots of interest. People visit the same places, see the same things, take the same pictures and leave with the same limited idea of what that place is all about.

But those of us who have actually lived there know better. We know where the action really happened. We can take you to the monuments that commemorate the towns most loved (and hated) teachers or to the places we hid from our parents or the best spot to have a first kiss.

Help a visitor gain a different kind of experience. Take someone new on a personal tour of your hometown.